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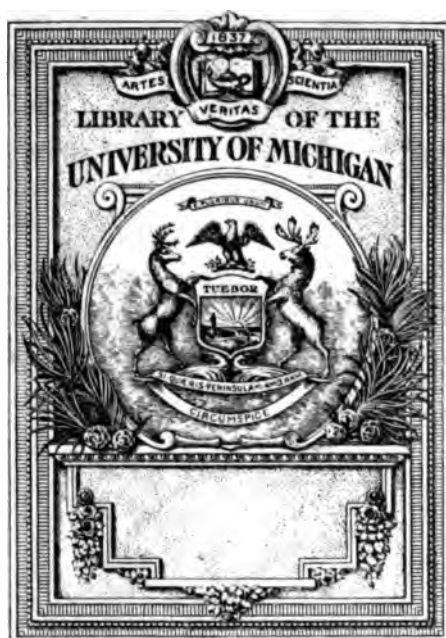
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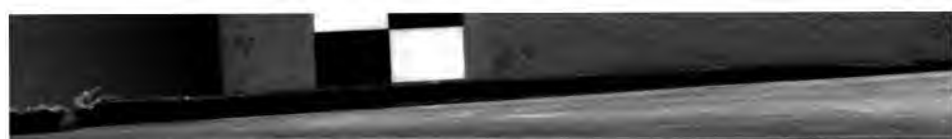




**BEFORE PORT ARTHUR
IN A DESTROYER**

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FIRST EDITION)
SECOND EDITION (3/6 NET) 4

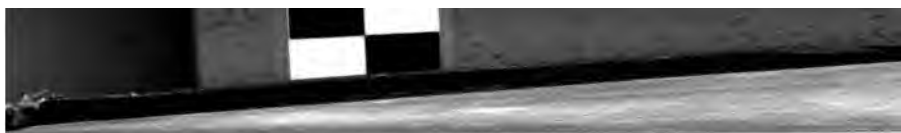




Underwood & Underwood, London and New York

PORT ARTHUR, LOOKING TOWARDS GOLDEN HILL.

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BEFORE PORT ARTHUR IN A DESTROYER

THE PERSONAL DIARY OF A
JAPANESE NAVAL OFFICER

TRANSLATED FROM THE SPANISH EDITION BY
CAPTAIN R. GRANT, D.S.O.
RIFLE BRIGADE



WITH MAP AND ILLUSTRATIONS

LONDON
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PREFACE

THE work from which this book is translated is a volume by a Spanish officer, described by him as a translation from the Japanese. It appeared a short time ago under the title—*Port Arthur: Diario de Operaciones de Hesibo Tikovara, comandante del torpedero "Osiva" de la Marina Japonesa.*

I have no knowledge of the Japanese language nor have I seen the Japanese original, so I cannot say how far the Spanish book is an accurate version of the original work.

I have verified the names and dates so far as I was able, but in the circumstances it is impossible for me to hold myself responsible for the circumstantial accuracy of the narrative.





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BEFORE PORT ARTHUR IN A DESTROYER

*Yokosuka, January 26th, 1904.—In the
dock yard, on board the Akasuki.*

At last I have got a moment's breathing space. These last fifteen days have been days of trial for all of us, officers and men—constantly on the move day and night, sometimes with the squadron, at other times with the Destroyer Flotilla in terrible weather and fiendish cold!

And always, always the same monotony. I cannot understand why they have chosen this dogs' weather for our manœuvres, for the only result is to sicken us of it all and to damage the *matériel*. If only we were sure that war would be declared! In that case everything would wear a different aspect. But now it has been

talked about for so long that finally one disbelieves it.

Certainly at sea we shall give the Russians a good account of ourselves, for although they are good fighters they possess little practical experience, and their ships, with a few exceptions, are not worth much. An officer of our General Staff was in Port Arthur a short time ago as a spy—we have been practising espionage for some time now—and is sure that the Russians do not believe in the proximity of war.

They do not manœuvre, they do not carry out any gunnery exercises, and in a corner of the arsenal there are goodness knows how many torpedoes, quite neglected. For months they have not been inspected by either officers or engineers. What a state they must be in—covered with rust! When they want to use them the machinery will probably refuse to work—which is a pity, especially as they are of the latest mark!

I must say I should like to know whether we are manœuvring for its own sake, or whether the Mikado has anything serious in view.

Although he is an advocate of peace, the only remedy he will have will be to make war. Ever since our alliance with England, and the con-



THE FIRST CANNON SHOT 3

tinued advance of the Russians in Manchuria, it has been apparent that the inevitable hour of "the first cannon shot" is drawing near. ✓

It is evident that the English want us to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them, and we can see that clearly. But let them beware how they play with us, for it may well happen that their turn will come when we have finished with the Russians. But . . . I must keep my mouth shut. The Commander is having us called up, probably to repeat his eternal lecture to us. "Naval officers must never mix themselves up in politics."

Perhaps he is right, and it would be better to spend our time drilling our men, and instilling obedience into them, so that the vessels confided to our care may always be in the highest state of efficiency.

Now that the leak which my destroyer had sprung has been stopped, and all the defects have been made good I want to examine the bottom plating and propellers carefully, as I think I heard rather a disquieting noise the last night of our reconnaissance off the Elliott Islands.

February 1st.

When I laid down my pen a few days ago, I

little thought that my modest prophecies would come to pass so soon. What a conference that was !

The Commander of the Destroyer Flotilla could hardly speak for emotion, and only managed to utter one single word : " Mobilisation ! " He could not keep still ; kept jumping from one place to another, twisting his legs, and laughing, without coming to the point. More explanations were unnecessary ; we knew all.

The moment had arrived, the moment for the whole squadron to mobilise with all despatch, and sail for Sasebo on receipt of orders. As far as one can judge, active hostilities may commence at any time, at last we are going to fight.

What a calamity if we should not arrive in time !

There is a busy day before us to-morrow. We have to clean and wax the deck, so that the ammunition cases will slide easily along it. The boilers are nearly ready, and practically all we have to do is to fill them. The crew cannot be improved upon, for they were already good when I joined, and this " peaceful " winter campaign will have improved them.

We have all learned something, and nothing can surprise us. I am quite certain of that.



A FAREWELL FÊTE

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February 2nd.

I have just come from a farewell "fête." It was pretty, but I do not care about these foreign customs which we have learned from the Germans. My uncle Kato, who now commands the *Iwate*, has often talked to me about these fêtes, to which he used to go when he was naval attaché in the suite of Prince Kaio in Germany.

On every possible occasion, and there is no lack of these, there are great banquets, a lot of chatter, and protestations of affection. I do not like the Germans; as far as foreigners are concerned, my preference is for the English. At least they are a practical race. This afternoon the contagion spread to me, and to all appearances I took an active part in the general merriment. . . . But I must not fill this diary with nonsense about myself, for in a short time I hope to be able to describe something more interesting. The war is a fact, and our flotilla, according to the Commander, will be the first to approach Port Arthur.

The place is very well known to us. During the past winter we have been there at least twenty times, and, as far as I am concerned, every creek and every point are as well known and familiar

as though they belonged to Japan. Perhaps in a short time they will do so.

February 4th.

It would be hard to recognise the city and harbour of Sasebo. It is full of troops, and the harbour is too small for the large number of ships destined for their transport. Every day ships go out with soldiers for Fusan and Masampo. But I hear that the greater number are to disembark in the centre of the Korean coast, to avoid having to move over those terrible roads. The point chosen is Chemulpo. The whole squadron will be under the orders of Admiral Togo, a fact in which we ought all to rejoice, since he took part in the war of '94 and is a very able man. Notwithstanding, I am very glad to have command of a destroyer, and to be at a certain distance from him. He is an unpleasant neighbour for his inferiors. The cruisers will be commanded by either Admiral Uriu or Admiral Kamimura; it is not yet known how the squadron will be organised and disposed.

February 5th.

We are on the eve of a struggle. The Govern-



WE PREPARE TO SAIL

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ment has broken off diplomatic relations with Russia, and has charged us with the defence and safeguarding of our rights, which means, briefly, that we are to assume the offensive as soon as we can.

Very early on Sunday we shall set sail with the whole squadron. Our destination is unknown, but it is probable that it will be Port Arthur or its neighbourhood. Presumably we may meet with the Russian fleet, and show them that their fate will be similar to that of the Chinese.

It is impossible to describe the animation of this city. No one would recognise the former Sasebo. But this will not last long, and soon the old calm and tranquillity will return.

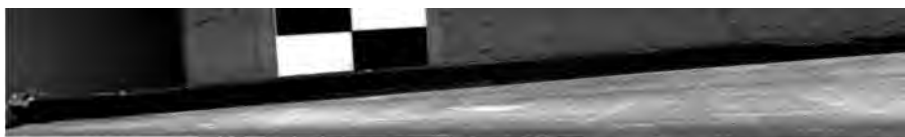
To-day we returned our old torpedoes to the arsenal and drew new ones in lieu, for the old ones have become so worn by constant running, that on the last occasion they failed us several times.

Only fancy a "miss-fire" when the real business is on, and there is a Russian for a target! I think if anything of that sort happened to me I should go off my head. This afternoon we shall have the new steel "cigars," and to-morrow morning we shall sail to join the squadron.

Now I shall have instruction every day, to show the crew for the hundredth time what must be done in every conceivable contingency. And surely on service many things will happen in very different ways from manœuvres! But why worry before the time?

February 6th.

The whole squadron sailed to-day from Sasebo. Whither is not known, as the only orders we have received are to follow the flagship. To judge by the direction, we are going to Port Arthur or its immediate neighbourhood—a wearisome voyage. The squadron goes at its usual pace, and we have to follow it slowly. The weather is cold, the sea rough, and the engineer unites with me in complaining about the slow speed. “It would have been better,” he says, “to have sailed later and to have gone after them faster.” And he is right. But I cannot do anything. I have promised him that when I am an admiral I will meet his wishes in this respect, and have advised him to keep a supply of picked coal in readiness, so that in the event of a night attack we shall not show any flame from the funnel,



ON THE HIGH SEAS

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The torpedo petty officer spends the whole day with his crew round the torpedo-tubes, adjusting the torpedoes, greasing them, and cleaning them as though he hoped by these means to make them infallible.

On the high seas, and with the prospect of something important happening one of these nights, one feels very different from usual—I should not like any one of my companions to surpass me in anything.

Every Russian *hors de combat* is for me a cause of rejoicing, for I really loathe that country, which is the only obstacle in the way of the aggrandisement of Japan. Why not confide to my diary my desire for glory and that no one shall surpass me? I simply cannot say what I would not do to prevent such a thing! That which Europeans call “fear of death” is not known here, but I know something about it from having read of it in their books, and my uncle Kato has told me about it. It seems to me to be simply folly, caused by their stupid religion. Fortunately, our politicians have not introduced it among us, and their half imbecile missionaries will not succeed in making lunatics of us.

I cannot make my lieutenant leave the deck.

Now he runs like a squirrel from one side to the other, and now he remains motionless scanning the horizon with his glass. It would be better if he saved his eyes for the night—there will be more need of them then.

They are beginning their preparations on board the battleships, which is very sensible. The Admiral thinks, and quite rightly too, that it is best to do things calmly so as to forget nothing.

On board my destroyer there is nothing to do, except to prepare and charge the torpedoes, and also to place the ammunition for the guns in convenient places.

February 9th : at night.

At last I have time to describe what happened. And to tell the truth I have got a great deal to relate—much more than could have been prophesied three days ago.

I must see if I am capable of relating the facts in their proper order, and as clearly as possible, although I am dying of fatigue. Yesterday morning the squadron reached the neighbourhood of Wei-hai-Wei and anchored there. The Destroyer Flotilla received orders to go as near

the flagship as possible before anchoring. The order was carried out without much difficulty in spite of the roughness of the sea, and no sooner finished than signals reached us for officers commanding divisions and the commanders of destroyers to go aboard the flagship. A curious trembling shook the whole of my body. Was it, then, settled that we, with the weapon of which we were so proud, were going to open the ball? I cannot help thinking that those stupid Russians were very far from suspecting that matters would come to a head so soon, without any declaration of war coming first—a rather ridiculous and inexplicable European custom which is completely ignored by us.

The Commander of our Division signalled to us that it was not necessary to change our uniform, as the Admiral wished to see us as we were, and as soon as possible.

No one needed the order to be repeated, and a few minutes later, provided with our notebooks, we were seated with our Commander in his boat.

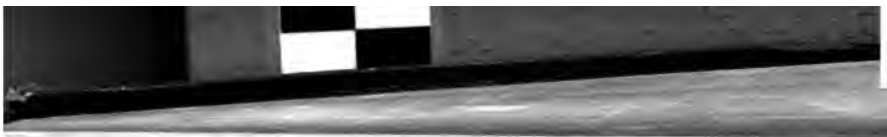
When we got on board the *Asahi*, the flagship, we were met by many officers, who congratulated us on being the first to meet the foe.

We went on to the Admiral's cabin. There

was old Togo with his European face, though he is not to blame for that, and round him were his Chief-of-Staff, several flag-lieutenants, and the captain of the *Asahi*.

He was holding before him a general map of the Yellow Sea, and another special one of Port Arthur. We sat down round the big table, and an officer of the Staff gave us each a map of the roadstead and harbour of Port Arthur, on which was clearly marked the exact position occupied by each of the ships which composed the Russian squadron. The officers of the Second Flotilla received a map of the bay of Talienwan and Dalny.

Then the Admiral, in his brief, concise way, addressed us more or less as follows: "Gentlemen, this very night, after twelve o'clock, the Russian squadron in Port Arthur and Dalny is to be attacked, and I leave it to the commanders of divisions to choose the right moment, after they have decided on the exact point of attack. Probably all the ships, and certainly all the battleships, will be in the roadstead of Port Arthur; but since some may be at Dalny, the Second Flotilla will make a thorough reconnaissance there."



TOGO'S INSTRUCTIONS

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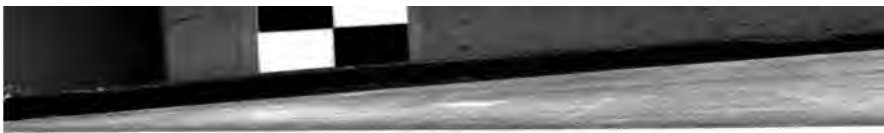
Even now I cannot help laughing when I think of the long faces which the destroyer commanders of the Second Division pulled. It is so nice to find oneself envied by others! For those poor devils realised clearly that the choicest morsels would be in Port Arthur.

"In the plan of the roadstead of Port Arthur which you have in front of you," the Admiral went on to say, "you can see exactly the places in which the enemy's ships are anchored. We have obtained these data from the accurate information of an officer of the General Staff who was some time in Port Arthur, in disguise, and made a plan of the different berths in the roadstead. According to his information it is more than probable that you will take the enemy completely off their guard, for it appears that they do not expect the outbreak of hostilities for several days yet. However, it is hardly necessary to warn you emphatically not to trust too much to the probability of this, as for some time past the Russians have been having sham fights and practising the attack of destroyers against battleships. From this it can be deduced that, as an opening of hostilities, they expect an attack by our Torpedo Flotilla, and it is

not at all unlikely that they have got a patrol service outside the roadstead. Although I leave the details of the attack to the intelligence and experience of the two commanders of divisions, I want, notwithstanding, to bring the following point to their notice : let the object of attack for each one of you be the big units, that is, the big battleships. If by chance you meet with small cruisers, try to avoid them as much as possible, only attacking them in the event of finding yourselves picked up by their search-lights and seriously threatened.

“ I need hardly remind you that the first condition required to get within effective range of the enemy, is the absolute invisibility of your own boats.

“ You must have your lights extinguished, and those which it is absolutely necessary to keep lighted must be properly screened. I must ask you, besides, to remind your engineers always to keep their fires well banked, and as the moment for attack approaches, to look carefully to the steam pressure. If for a moment, however brief, sparks come up the funnel, your own boat is discovered, and the result of the whole attack is jeopardised.



CONCLUDING WORDS

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“The speed of a destroyer should only reach its maximum at the moment of attack or when discovered by cruisers or battleships ; and let me especially remind you that the attack must be delivered with the greatest energy possible, because, gentlemen, we are at war, and only he who acts fearlessly can hope for success. Your duty, gentlemen, is very simple, and I only make one request, a request which on several previous occasions when I have been in command, has produced excellent results in cases much more complicated than this—Show yourselves worthy of the confidence which I place in you, and for which I am responsible to His Majesty the Mikado.”

With these words the Admiral rose, and all of us with him.

“I hope,” he added, “that we shall all meet again when your mission has been accomplished ; but if any one of you has to die, his is the greater glory, that of having sacrificed his life for the greatness of Japan, and history will place him for ever among its heroes.”

Then we gave an enthusiastic cheer for the Mikado, and—most unusual occurrence—the venerable Togo made a sign to his head steward,

and a few moments later offered us each a glass of champagne—a European drink ! The Admiral drank to our safety and to the happy issue of our enterprise ; and we also drank to our own safety !

He then shook hands with us all and dismissed us.

On reaching the Flotilla we went to the cabin of our Divisional Commander, where he explained his plan to us briefly. At sunset we were to weigh and proceed in a body until we got very near the outer roadstead, separating then on the order of the Commander. He allotted to each one of us a part of the roadstead, so that the attack would take place on all the Russian ships at the same time. It was not known for certain if the Russians had got out their torpedo-nets, so it was decided to fit our torpedoes with the new cutters which are necessary for penetrating them. This was a great pity. For, as I pointed out to the Division Commander, I felt no confidence that these arrangements would work ; and moreover, with them on, our torpedoes had always run badly.

He agreed with me, but observed rightly that



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RUSSIAN BATTLESHIP "PERESVIET."



if the nets were out the only hope of success lay in using the net-cutters, and to counteract their bad effect on the torpedoes, we must get as near as possible to the ships before attacking. He concluded with the following words : " Do not forget that from the moment the signal to separate is given, each one of you works independently. For this reason I am neither able nor do I wish to give you any detailed orders ; no one can tell how you will find yourselves when the moment arrives. But above all things, be vigilant.

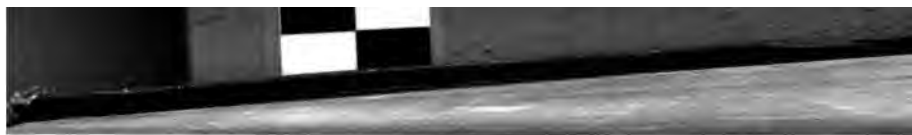
" I do not consider it necessary to remind you that no boat, even if damaged, must fall into the hands of the enemy, and in addition to this your one care must be to arrange matters so as to discharge your torpedoes with effect ; everything else is of secondary importance. If a destroyer has discharged the torpedoes in her tubes, and is not *hors de combat*, she should get out of sight and range at full speed, so as to load again with spare torpedoes. It is not impossible, usually, to deliver a second attack. The most important thing, on every possible occasion, is to keep one's head. And this last point, above all, must be impressed on the petty officers stationed at the torpedo-tubes. No shot must miss, for this would be quite

unpardonable, in view of the fact that the enemy's ships are anchored. The commander has only to look to the handling of his boat. The lieutenant must see that the tubes are properly trained. Everything must be ready before the enemy discovers us with his searchlights and opens fire.

"Moreover, I must ask you, after giving your final instructions to your crews, to let them rest as much as possible. Your *personnel* is composed of picked men, and every one knows what he has to do, and how to do it. If the commander is laid low, the lieutenant must take command, then the bo'sun, and lastly a petty officer. As regards any of the enemy's torpedo-boats which it is impossible to avoid, open fire on them at once, and without wasting time ; and I ask you not to forget that a hostile vessel, if crippled, can be easily boarded.

"If this occasion should arise, do not continue the firing for a long time, for, as you all know, and therefore will probably laugh at me for repeating it, you may damage each other—a most important consideration on these occasions."

These words referred to me, because a few weeks before, in a torpedo-boat attack, I had done a



ON BOARD THE "AKASUKI" 19

great deal of damage to the bows of another destroyer.

And so he went on for a long time, for the poor man never knows when to stop when he is fairly off, and consequently we had to swallow once more (without any omissions) the instructions on the manner in which the commander of a destroyer should behave in a fight and in attack, all of which we had heard, read, and had impressed upon us hundreds of times.

And I thought, and so did nearly all the others, that to listen to these interminable discourses with patience was much more difficult and wearisome than opening the belly of a big Russian battleship with a torpedo.

At last he finished, and, following a high example, he also offered us each a glass of champagne and dismissed us. He added that in two hours' time we must weigh, and hoped that every one would join with him in seeing that all was in order for the fight.

When I got on board my *Akasuki* the crew were all on deck, anxious to hear the news. All my comrades were burning with anxiety to show for once, at any rate, of what they were capable. What great satisfaction a man experiences, what

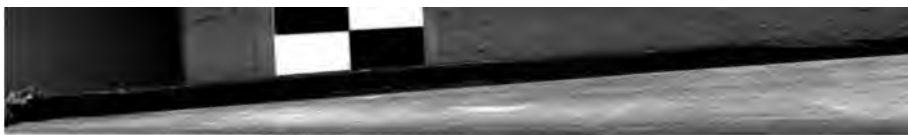
security and confidence he feels, when he knows that he can rely on everybody, from the highest to the lowest, and that the same ardour inspires petty officers, seamen, and stokers !

I explained the plan which we had to carry out that night, and I was deeply touched by the shouts and applause with which—contrary to discipline—my words were received.

“ We will talk about it afterwards,” I told them. “ Now we must get our boat ready for the fray.”

Not a word more was necessary. In the twinkling of an eye every one was at his post. Together with the torpedo men I inspected the torpedoes, and had them charged with compressed air to the regulation pressure. We tried the net-cutters to see that they were correct and put them on the torpedoes, and lastly arrived the great moment, so often longed for—that of removing the safety-pin from the pistol.

Certainly none of us forgot that, although in the war of 1894 with China, two commanders, in the excitement of the moment, fired their torpedoes without removing the safety-pins, naturally obtaining thereby admirable results ! Ever since, quite rightly, this has been unceasingly dinned into our ears. Attention is called to the



FINAL ARRANGEMENTS

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mistakes made by others, so that thus we may take care to avoid them. As far as I was concerned, my engineer, an intelligent man who only required a glance from me to understand my wishes, had already made all preparations ; everything was spotlessly clean, and lumps of picked coal were stacked on the stokehold plates. Thus, on receipt of the signal, he could get the best speed out of his engines.

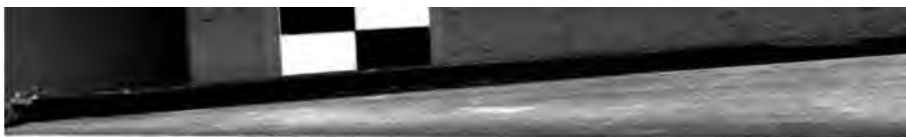
In the event of the engine-room telegraph breaking down or not acting, I arranged that my orders should be received in the engine-room by whistle, direct from the lieutenant, bo'sun, or one of the petty officers with whom I could communicate from the bridge.

Afterwards we went round to examine the watertight compartments. In each of them we found the following : tow, levers, shores, plugs, wedges, and pieces of fearnought to block up any possible leak, so that in the event of the next compartment being flooded, the bulkheads could be quickly shored up, and thus the pressure of water could not burst them open. This is what is prescribed in the event of water coming in, but, as will be seen later, at times it is not easy to do. A thing which is very easy by daytime, and

My arrangements, then, being made, dinner to be got ready for my men, I told the cook to let the rations be prepared so that **a full stomach," they say in Europe. "I don't care** badly, but one fights all the better on these occasions I shall always remember the celebrated remark of the admiral of the Chinese fleet, who, when it was announced that the Japanese fleet was approaching, merely exclaimed, "Bring all hands to dinner!"

The Divisional Commander gave me a very pleasant and inviting me together with the other officers, and during supper showed himself very liberal and mental as a German. . . .

He is not married, and under those circumstances it is all the same whether one lives ten or twenty years more or less, and in any case there is no better fate than to die fighting against the enemy, whom every Japanese ought to do.



UNDER WAY

23

other, thinking, "Shall we ever meet again?" But this emotion lasted but a moment. As soon as I stepped on board my boat, where steam was up and the circulators throbbing, I felt as though I had mounted some mettlesome steed, who, impatient for the fray, was champing his bit, and the satisfied expressions of all my crew showed that they had complete confidence in me.

At last the whistle sounded, the Divisional Commander's signal for us to start, and we all got under way together, at half speed following our chief's destroyer, the course being north-east. The darkness soon swallowed us up completely, and the cold was intense.

The distance to Port Arthur, as far as I remember, was thirty or forty miles, and it would therefore be more than an hour and a half before we could meet the enemy.

I again inspected my boat, and fell my crew in to explain to them the situation in which we should probably find ourselves, pointing out that, above all, the most absolute silence must reign, and orders must be given in a low voice transmitted from one to the other. We had practised this so many times that we could be sure of the result. All information as regards damage or

losses was to be given me as they occurred, since under no circumstances could I leave the bridge. Arms were served out, revolvers loaded, and again I had the satisfaction of seeing warlike ardour and the most perfect confidence depicted on every face.

I had under my orders a very different lot from those stupid Russians, who obey and execute their duty like automatons, whilst our men know that they are fighting for the greatness and prosperity of Japan.

I ordered every one to his post and myself went on the bridge. All the lights were screened, and not a gleam penetrated to the outer darkness. Within reach I had a dark lantern covered over with a flag.

We were already about five miles from the outer roadstead, and it was necessary to be very alert and prepared for every eventuality. The signal from our chief, two whistles, "Separate," reached our ears. The boats inclined to right and left and I pursued my way behind the Divisional Commander, who went on much in the original direction.

Now that the thick smoke of the boat which had preceded me was not blowing into my face

and removing all possibility of seeing anything, I was able to make out that we were very near Port Arthur. The lighthouse situated between the outer and inner roadsteads was throwing out its brilliant beams; the town also was completely lit up, and the objects which could be seen nearer to us were evidently the squadron, although even with my glasses I could not make certain of it.

Those poor devils, then, had no presentiment, and apparently were wrapped in peaceful slumber, after having said their stupid evening prayers, and asked their God to protect them during their sleep. "Ah," I thought to myself, "to-night your safety depends on what we do!"

The Commander's boat suddenly went astern. I naturally did the same, and several low whistles called me up alongside him.

I ran alongside, and my chief then told me that he had been able to make out by the map, that the *Pallada* and *Czarevitch* were the easiest for us to attack.

He proposed that he should attack the *Czarevitch*, while I was first to discharge a torpedo at the *Pallada*, and afterwards attack one of the ships anchored further in.

Moreover, as it was possible, according to the position of the ships in the roadstead, that the *Pallada* was on the watch, I was to make the red and white signal which was used by ships wanting to come into Port Arthur.

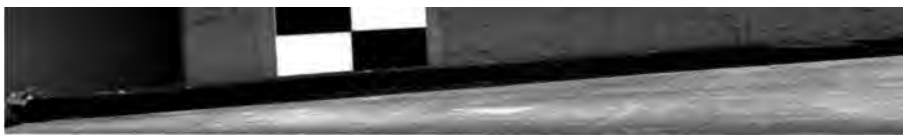
My heart thumped hard against my ribs. In a few moments the golden dream of all those years of torpedo work was to be realised !

Innumerable thoughts crossed my mind with extraordinary rapidity, without my being able at the moment to say what they were. I ran up and down from the deck to the bridge, and from the bridge to the deck, and finally called my men together to explain the situation to them, and where I intended to deliver the attack.

The *Pallada* could already be distinguished by her great number of lights. We must have been a few thousand metres away, possibly a little more.

“What current is there ?” I asked the pilot.

He looked at his watch and told me that an hour ago the tide had begun to flow, for which reason the *Pallada* must be lying with her bows seawards, which, to tell the truth, was not very favourable for us, for on board the big ships the look-out is always more vigilant forward than aft.



THE "PALLADA"

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But what was to be done ? To attack the stern I should first have to go right into the roadstead, and then very probably I could not attack.

I advanced slowly, as close as I could, and verified the fact that the *Pallada* was peacefully at anchor. In a few moments all the final preparations were made, and I gave orders for the starboard side to be ready to open fire.

We were about two or three hundred metres from our objective, which remained absolutely quiet. At the last I was guilty of an act of insubordination, into which I was led by the pilot.

With a gesture of disapprobation, he remarked that he did not think it advisable to make the red and white signal ; for in the event of the enemy taking notice of it and wanting us to continue the exchange of signals, we could not do so. The man was quite right ; and another point could be added to this, namely, that possibly another of our destroyers might have the same idea and make the same signal.

And so it turned out ; some one made it, probably my chief on board the *Kasumio*.

Through the speaking-tube I shouted to the engineer to go " full speed ahead." The pace of my boat began to quicken little by little, whilst

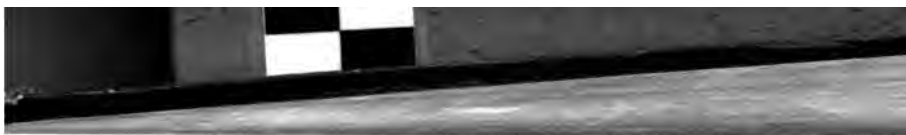
I remained with my glasses fixed on the enemy, whose outlines could now be perfectly distinguished. The night was dark and the enemy's ship well lighted up : a night expressly designed for an attack.

Instinctively I looked at the funnel : the engineer was behaving well ; not the slightest spark was escaping. I made the usual signal to the engine-room and put the helm a little to starboard, so as to get closer for my shots, since it was natural that in their excitement the men would not shoot as well as usual, and it would be impossible to overestimate the gravity of a wasted shot.

The lieutenant came running along the bridge to tell me that everything was ready.

The great moment had arrived ! The engines, funnel, bridge, and conning-tower were quivering, and the whole boat was trembling, owing to the speed. The spray was splashing my face. How strange that one can remember such trifles ! I was now near enough to be able to distinguish the outlines of the bridge of the *Pallada*, and I thought I saw a great deal of movement going on on the lower decks, although all the crew ought to have been in their hammocks long ago.

I sent down another warning to say that soon,



THE FIRST TORPEDO

29

very soon, our ship would be in the line of fire. The reminder was unnecessary, for the men were already alive to the fact, and the torpedo-man had his hand on the lever, ready to discharge the torpedo. When the bridge of the *Pallada* was approximately forty-five degrees before the beam, we suddenly noticed a great commotion. We had been discovered. Cries of fear, words of command, and signals were heard in all directions.

I had no time to lose, and again ordered the engineer to go on as fast as possible.

At two hundred metres' range, according to my calculations, the first torpedo was fired. As far as I could calculate from my post, it ought to have struck abaft the bridge of the *Pallada*. Scarcely had the "yellow cigar" left its tube, making a great dive into the water, than the Russians began to shoot and work their searchlights.

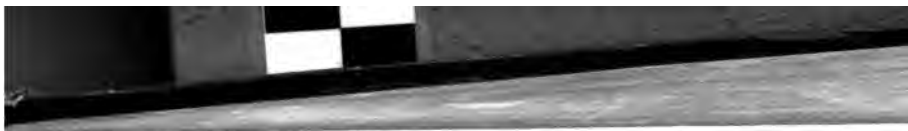
If it is true that up till then they had been off their guard and not on the look out, it is impossible to grudge them praise for the great rapidity with which they ran to their guns, clearing them away in less time than it takes to tell, and making their searchlights play all round.

Up till then I had kept perfectly calm, but I

from the after tube; and naturally was wasted.

When we changed our course again, we were able to satisfy ourselves that the ship had got home; a violent commotion was perceptible long before the explosion reached us. The men were on deck, and whose curiosity would have made them die a hundred times before they were told me afterwards that they saw a column of water rise to a great height, abaft the bridge of the *Pallada*. If it was, and probably it is, a torpedo must have struck the stokers in their quarters. And it is beyond doubt that the worthy *Pallada* has had sufficient to keep her on her feet for some time, and that is enough for me.

Her restless searchlights were hunting from one side to the other. There was



THE "CZAREVITCH"

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and altered my course, cunningly allowing the beam of light to look for us in our original position. After a minute they told me that two fresh torpedoes were ready, so we moved in the direction of Port Arthur, where we could see indistinctly a ship of great size, which according to the plan should be the *Czarevitch*. At the same moment I saw a flash on board; a second afterwards her guns went off, and the discharges from at least ten ships rang out. Then we heard an explosion; searchlights were turned on; everywhere we could hear orders being given, while my boat dashed on at full speed.

Forward! That was my one thought. Forward, come what may!

Suddenly, not far from the *Czarevitch*, which, like the *Pallada*, had her bows turned towards me, at about 800 metres distance from us, I saw one of our destroyers appear. If I was not mistaken it should be the *Shinonome*, which was running at full speed towards the *Czarevitch* to attack her. My first act was to run to the engine-room telegraph, for, had we gone on at the same speed, not only would the *Shinonome* have been hindered in her attack, but we should have run the risk of collision.

As neither the *Czarevitch* nor the other ships had discovered me, coming as I did from ahead, while they with their searchlights and guns were watching and firing away on each side, I reduced my speed till I was nearly stationary, watching and hoping that the *Shinonome* would accomplish her task. When, according to my calculations, she had got roughly within range, and was preparing for attack, the searchlights of the *Czarevitch* caught her, and such a heavy fire from guns of all calibres broke out, that I thought the unfortunate vessel's last hour had come. Notwithstanding, she discharged her two torpedoes.

A moment afterwards I heard the noise of a shell bursting, saw a brilliant light on her deck, and saw her disappear gradually into the darkness.

I kept hoping always to hear the explosion of the torpedoes, yet strange to say they could not be heard, in spite of the fact that they must have hit the ship.

In the meantime, with indescribable audacity, and without having been discovered by any of the ships with their vigilant searchlights, there was I, silent and watchful ; the pilot, seizing me by the arm, called my attention to the starboard



SEARCHLIGHTS IN PORT ARTHUR.



side of the *Czarevitch*, which had her torpedo-nets out, and in these the torpedoes from the *Shinonome* were hung up.

This explained everything. I could see perfectly any number of bubbles rising from the water alongside the net, which held the torpedoes firmly suspended by their heads, and the booms which held them standing out horizontally from the ship. As I have already remarked, the antiquated net-cutters with which the torpedoes were provided were no use whatever.

Suddenly we saw another destroyer appear from the same place, evidently detached from our flotilla at the same time as the *Shinonome*. She came on at a rate of twelve or fourteen knots, sure sign that she had been damaged by the enemy.

The commander was a brave man, and intended to attack. But he ought not to have done it in the same place, for the crew of the *Czarevitch*, who were on the look out on the starboard side, enveloped his destroyer with their searchlights, and before she got within a range of 400 metres, the first shells struck her. "The moment has come," I said to myself. I gave orders for "full speed ahead," and for the torpedo-tubes to be

ready, put the helm to starboard, and attacked the *Czarevitch* on the other side. I took a last glance at my colleague, and what I saw was terrible.

He was without torpedoes, for there was a third one imprisoned in the net, and the heroic little vessel was on the point of foundering. Her stern was submerged, and every moment she was sinking more and more. I could see on one side of the bridge the mouth of the funnel, from which a mass of white steam was escaping, showing that one of the boilers had burst, and the conning-tower was almost demolished. She was about to perish, and one could do nothing to help. I had the presence of mind to remove the net-cutters from my torpedoes, as the *Czarevitch* had only her beam defence in position and had her bows as well as her stern unprotected. I hesitated for a moment as to which end was the best to attack, and decided on the stern. This was best, as there was a greater probability of not being seen. It would be impossible now to put down truthfully all the thoughts that flashed through my mind at that moment. It is scarcely possible to reflect at times like these. So many and so strange are the thoughts which cross one's mind,



A SUCCESSFUL SHOT

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that the nerves and will are paralysed and work unconsciously.

Anyhow I must not fail! I went on at full speed with the helm to starboard, and ran on obliquely till I was under the stern of the *Czarevitch*. I emptied my two tubes, but could not make out which of the torpedoes hit the mark.

At the exact moment when the torpedo-man was preparing to press the levers, the crew of the *Czarevitch* discovered us with their searchlights. There were cries of fear, hasty words of command, and two seconds afterwards the firing began. The first shots came very near my boat. Some fell over, others short, some to the right and some to the left; all screamed and whistled in the air and then plunged into the water. My torpedo had accomplished its mission; a violent commotion in the sea, a loud explosion and high column of water, convinced me that the attack had been successful.

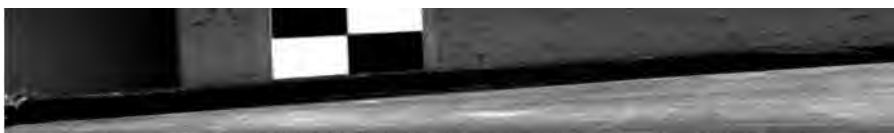
Immediately afterwards I thought that the last moment of my life had come. The hail of projectiles on my boat never stopped for an instant. The deck was riddled. They were probably aiming at the bridge, and consequently at me and my pilot; but they missed their aim. Evi-

dently the Russians are so stupid that they do not understand the theory of raising and lowering their sights.

In spite of being struck by my torpedoes, they nearly destroyed us completely, for a 15-cm. shell hit the bows on a level with the water-line, and afterwards went out near the rudder without exploding. In itself the damage was not of great importance, but in consequence of the great speed of the boat, the water came pouring into the fore compartment and filled it completely. Fortunately we were able to confine it to one compartment, but anyhow the bows were submerged.

The predicament of the boat became worse every moment. A 15-cm. shell entered the conning-tower, destroying one of the walls and bursting on contact with the other. It brought down the mast, killing a petty officer and two men, and exploded a box of ammunition. The torpedo-tube itself sustained no damage, but the mounting had been torn up, and so the whole apparatus became unserviceable.

The funnel was full of holes, partly made by gun shots and partly by the explosion of a shell



OUT OF CONTROL

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which fell short and burst in the water. The shell must have been highly explosive, for the boat was full of innumerable pieces of it, the largest of which pierced and riddled the funnel.

Some 4·7-cm. shells would have put an end to my poor engines if they had not entered the coal-bunkers, where they exploded without doing much damage.

I dashed away from the *Czarevitch* at full speed. The bows of my boat continued settling down more and more, and owing to the great speed at which we were travelling the water swept over the deck, making the bows sink yet more. The after bulkhead of the fore compartment was on the point of yielding, and I saw that in another moment it would do so. Moreover, for the same reason, the boat was not under control, and therefore it was necessary to get her into a horizontal position at all costs.

The pumps on board were ready for use, so I had them started, filling the after compartment with water. By this means the whole boat sank a little lower in the water, but at any rate she was horizontal, and in a position which made her capable of being controlled; and the screw now remained completely under water.

While I was running away from the *Czarevitch* the uproar in the roadstead continued, and the light from the searchlights enabled me to distinguish several of our boats here and there.

To judge by the manner in which the Russians managed these appliances, it was fairly obvious that they had not had much practice. They worked them so badly that they illuminated each other instead of our vessels.

Nevertheless the crew of the *Czarevitch* continued to strike me with their searchlights, but not with their projectiles, which showed that their gunners were in want of practice in night firing. I am of opinion that the Russians are not easily excited. They open fire when and where they are ordered, and to the best of their power and ability. What is more, they do not know what fear is.

Yet the fact remains that although I did not manœuvre my boat particularly well, I managed to escape. Beyond doubt I owe it to not being afraid, and also to my pilot.

My unfortunate head was bursting from that fiendish noise, and as I listened to the whistling of the terrible shells which set the air quivering, one idea only took possession of me: "Faster! faster!"



I AM WOUNDED

39

As soon as I was out of range of the *Czarevitch*, I glanced at the compass and gave orders to the pilot to go out of the roadstead into the open sea. He did not need the order to be repeated. As I bent forward I noticed that blood was coming out of my back, so I called for my lieutenant, but the unfortunate man was stretched out below with a broken leg ; and the pilot, who was safe and sound, came to relieve me for a moment.

I had the wound bandaged as well as was possible by the sick-berth steward, after making him wash it thoroughly, as some rags from my coat had got into it. Doubtless I had been struck by a fragment of shell.

I sat down on the bridge and looked round me. Outside the roadstead, though I was not the least expecting it, and a long way off, I saw the signal " Recall " made by the Commander of the Flotilla. I was unable to answer with my electric apparatus, which, together with the mast, had been destroyed, so I ordered a rocket to be fired, and went in the direction of the signal. There were already two destroyers in the Flotilla, but the *Shirakuma*, which had sunk under my eyes near the *Czarevitch*, was missing.

Soon the rest of the Flotilla rejoined, but very

slowly, owing to the fact that two or three of our boats were not in a condition to make more than six or eight knots. We set out for the Elliott Islands, where we had to remain till the following day.

We went along very close together, relating our adventures to each other. I think I had been the most fortunate, as nearly all the others had planted their torpedoes in the nets, and none of the cutters had worked. Only the *Yadsuma*, like myself, had noticed the nets, and, in order to attack the *Retvisan*, had taken her by the bows, which were unprotected. Our chief had discharged all his torpedoes, and as he came out of the roadstead, made sure that he saw the *Pallada* going at full speed towards the inner harbour.

I did not think I had absolutely destroyed her, but this news was a great disappointment to me. The *Czarevitch* and *Retvisan* had not been torpedoed in vital parts, but I was sure of having destroyed one screw and the rudder of the "Czar's son," which are difficult repairs to effect; and if the *Retvisan* had a good hole in her bows, the affairs would not prove altogether a joke for the Russians. "Besides paralysing their movements" (our Commander says, and he is right), "the docks in



RESULT OF THE ATTACK 41

Port Arthur are not large enough to repair battleships."

The surprise had evidently been complete, and this was clearly shown by the fact that they did not pursue us. If only one cruiser had managed to chase us, she could easily have overtaken our Flotilla, composed as it was of cripples, hardly able to manœuvre, and she would have made a good business of it, either blowing us into the air, or sinking us into the depths of the sea.

During our slow progress towards the Elliott Islands a telegram was received from the rest of the squadron, asking for news. The Commander of the Division replied, giving an account of our attack, which had taken place at the hour fixed upon, as the result of which three big Russian ships had been damaged by torpedoes, one of our boats sunk, and the others damaged more or less, though all were under control. We had to lament the death of the commander of a destroyer and some of the others wounded.

It was Admiral Togo in person who was asking, and he ordered us to join the flagship.

The weather had become so beautiful and the sea so calm that we could carry out the orders

received without the slightest danger or trouble. The Commander of the Division ordered us to prepare to transfer the wounded to the sick bay of the flagship.

Unfortunately we only had one surgeon for the whole Flotilla, and he had his hands full with the wounded on board our Commander's boat.

As soon as we got near the *Asahi*, we were received by the whole crew with "Banzais!" I must, however, confess that I felt too tired and worn out to appreciate this sentiment of joy and triumph.

Admiral Togo, with his staff, visited each of the destroyers, and expressed his admiration to all, especially the wounded; nor did he stint his remarks of appreciation to us officers. In particular, he spent a long time with me, owing to the fact that I was the only one present at the end of the *Shirakuma*. I told him that if the net-cutters had worked, there was no doubt that the three Russian ships would have been sunk, as I had seen four torpedoes hung up in the net of one single ship, the *Czarevitch*. The Admiral showed a lively interest, but this remark did not please him much; and in point of fact it is not a very agreeable thing to hear, since the

chance of attacking the stern or bows seldom occurs.

In order to rest the *personnel*, and also because the weather was unsettled and it was dangerous with our boats to remain in the open sea, the Admiral gave orders for us to go, towed by two cruisers, to one of the islands situated north of the Miastao Straits, so that we could all rest together. No sooner said than done. The cruisers were ready, and a few minutes later we were gliding smoothly over the calm sea, without using our engines.

On the following day we overhauled our boats, and convinced ourselves that it was absolutely necessary to take them all to Sasebo for repairs.

Not one was undamaged—in the bows, in the stern, on deck and everywhere were injuries of greater or less importance. Two destroyers had their emergency-rudders broken. On board mine, probably from the excessive pressure of steam, a boiler was leaking to such an extent that a lot of tubes would have to be replaced. Even the *personnel* was in need of repairs!

In a word, for the present we were *hors de combat*. Fortunately for me my wound was simply a scratch, which did not prevent my doing

duty ; so I told the Commander of the Flotilla that I had no wish to go to Sasebo.

He answered that he could not give me leave, for the other commanders would all want the same privilege, and naturally all could not remain behind. I had to resign myself and make up my mind to return as soon as I could leave my boat at Sasebo. Nevertheless I kept my mouth shut, while I thought of the best way of carrying out my project. When, on the following day, the Chief-of-Staff arrived in the cruiser *Kasagi* to visit the boats and bring orders from the Admiral, taking advantage of my long-standing friendship with him, I went on board and implored him not to leave me in inactivity in Sasebo, and at least to post me in the meanwhile to the squadron.

He answered that I must take my boat at once to Sasebo, and afterwards get my wound thoroughly healed.

Sasebo, February 12th.

There were many more repairs to be done on my boat than I thought : even the ammunition, especially that stowed in the bows, was unserviceable, owing to the wet, and they had to change it.



ADVANTAGES OF WAR

45

Moreover, after the attack, in the roadstead of Port Arthur, I must have run into something under water, for both my screws were bent, and the rudder damaged. We found this out on reaching the dockyard, and told the Commander. The boat was at once docked, and then another injury of great importance could be seen in the after end of the keel. I cannot explain when or how it happened. Evidently the pilot, while I was half stunned on the bridge, touched the bottom in going out of the roadstead. One of the advantages of war! If the same thing had happened to me some months ago I should have shuddered for the consequences, and now the damage is repaired and no one says anything.

In spite of the fact that they work hard and well in the dockyard, and it is impossible to complain, it will be many days before we can put to sea. There is much to be done. In addition to the repairs to the hull we have got to change the boiler-tubes, and lastly test the new torpedoes which have been supplied.

I have heard this very day that they are going to give us net-cutters of a new type.

How much better to leave such useless things alone! At the best they never work. And

moreover it is almost impossible that the Russians will let themselves be surprised again at anchor in Port Arthur ; and if under way they will not be using their nets, so that in that case also the cutters will be useless.

Sasebo, February 13th.

The *Fuji* has just arrived. She has been taking part in the bombardment of Port Arthur. The officers say that the Russians, and especially the coast batteries, shoot very well. Cautious as ever, Togo kept at a distance of 6,000 or 7,000 metres. The forts of Port Arthur are so high that they are very dangerous to our ships. What can the best battleship do when shells are falling on her deck ? The *Fuji* has been struck in the stern by what appears to be a 30-cm. shell. It has not touched one single important spot, but has made a large hole, destroyed two cabins, dismounted a couple of guns, wounded an officer, and killed two men.

Sasebo, February 14th.

My application was successful. Yesterday evening the Commander of the Flotilla sent for me to tell me that the Chief of the Staff, through the commander of the *Fuji*, had asked him if

he could spare me while my boat was undergoing repairs, which would not be completed for some time, and since he had no objection, I was going to relieve an officer of the *Fuji*. When my destroyer was ready, my lieutenant would perform my duties till I could take command.

Naturally I am delighted. The *Fuji* will be able to sail in a couple of days, and so perhaps I shall take part in a bombardment.

The attack on the Russian ships at Chemulpo must have been worth seeing. How I should have enjoyed being there !

What a pity that they were given time enough to sink the *Variag*, a fast cruiser which would have been so useful to us ! And it was a case of not being able to save her. She must have sunk quickly in view of the fact that the crew could not be saved.

Why allow officers and some hundreds of fighting men to escape, only to return and take up arms again against us ?

Sasebo, February 18th.

Nothing has happened yet on board my battleship. The *Fuji* will not be ready as soon as I thought ; and on the other hand the work on the

destroyers goes on at high pressure, so that we shall soon be able to go out. It appears we are destined for a special mission.

On the 16th the new armoured cruisers, the *Nisshin* and the *Kasuga*, arrived safe and sound. They are now going to Yokohama to take on board ammunition and victuals, and to complete the crews. They seem to be excellent ships, and a proof of it is their having arrived from Genoa in good condition and without developing any defects after such a long journey. On this occasion the English have behaved like good fellows, for the *personnel* which has brought them out is composed almost entirely of Englishmen, a fact which I never realised until now.

Sasebo, February 20th.

To-morrow or next day we are going to play a good practical joke on the Russians. We have painted four ships black, and with these we intend to obstruct the passage from the outer roadstead to the interior of the harbour—more or less like what the Americans did at Santiago. We hope very much that the result will be better. The entrance is very narrow, and if we succeed in closing it, the luckless

Russians will not escape us and will be caught in a trap. The Commander of our division, who has not yet received definite orders himself, said to-day that the ships must go to the positions indicated under their own steam.

There will be only an officer, an engineer, and eight or nine seamen on board. The transports are loaded with stones and cement so that they will sink quickly, and below will be placed dynamite cartridges which will be ignited by electricity

It all sounds nice and easy, but first we must get the ships into the entrance, and this is rather more difficult than it sounds. The officers of the *Fuji* say that the *Retvisan* is outside in the roadstead, almost touching the coast. She really is a floating battery, and her line of fire is in the very direction in which we have to go with the transports ; moreover, her search-lights are always working and lighting up her immediate vicinity. If only I could get within torpedo range of that monster, with what pleasure would I plant a beautiful "yellow cigar" in her belly !

We shall see ! Perhaps we shall be successful in the enterprise. Much more difficult tasks

have been attended with success ; everything depends on the spirit with which one undertakes them. Our men are excellent ; the seamen and stokers of the steamers are all volunteers picked from hundreds who have come forward. This is an example which the Russians could not show ; I do not think that those obtuse creatures have got any idea of patriotism.

Sasebo, February 21st.

Within a quarter of an hour we shall start with the transports. The *Sadzanami*, not being ready, remains behind. Her commander is swearing and protesting, but without avail.

Elliott Islands, February 26th.

At last I have got a moment's leisure. What a pity it is our splendid attempt to bottle them up came to grief ! And if one thinks over things in cold blood, it would really have been a miracle had it succeeded. When during the night of the 23rd of February we arrived with our transports near the promontory of Liautishan, we met the Second Destroyer Flotilla, which had already been under fire. We were twelve destroyers in all so that, with the five big transports, we made up a

regular squadron. "If the Russians allow us to approach," said my lieutenant, "it must be because they are blind." I thought the same, and came to the conclusion that this venture was impracticable and absurd. I should like to know whose idea it was. Obviously, it would be a capital thing to be able to obstruct the passage for the Russians, but how can this be accomplished, when they are on the look-out, have a great battleship in the entrance itself, cruisers which patrol the harbour, coast batteries which are continually working their searchlights, and the whole lot banging away with heavy guns? Knowing all this, I do not know what we could hope for. The Commander of the Flotilla is right when he says, "Admiral Togo has no appetite for a fight with the coast batteries; he wants, at all costs, to avoid weakening his squadron. But something must be done, even if for no other reason than to telegraph to Japan, and his Chief of the Staff has to think out the most extraordinary schemes."

The operations worked out as follows: From Liautishan we got under way slowly, following the coast-line, which in those parts is very high. We proceeded towards the roadstead, keeping all

ceived a sketch of the entrance positions where they had to sink on them. They had to sink the which reason it was necessary, was to be hoped for, to take the dedicated with mathematical precision came the most difficult part of the sink them there.

In the roadstead there was current, which, as was natural, stronger in the narrow channel of the harbour. It would have been a being celebrated in verse to have accuracy under such circumstances thinking the manoeuvre is impossible. Withstanding, I hear that Togo repeating it until he succeeds.

discontented as the

THE "RETIVSAN" IS ALERT 53

ing. The huge coast searchlights, both on the right and the left, kept constantly illuminating different parts of the roadstead, searching everywhere. Among them we could make out two situated lower down; they could only be those of the *Retvisan*. By a faulty movement of one of the coast reflectors we saw two large ships which were in the roadstead lit up, one after the other—evidently the two cruisers which were watching the harbour. A quarter of an hour afterwards the leading ship found herself suddenly lit up by a searchlight, and at the same time we heard a loud report. The *Retvisan* had kept watch perfectly, for she fired off all her guns at us. From the coast as well, two heavy and two small guns fired on us. The leading vessel was soon badly damaged, and began to sink, but her captain ran her aground on the sand to starboard. I was approaching slowly with my usual temerity, to save the crew, for I supposed that attention would be concentrated on the others, now that the first ship had been damaged and put *hors de combat*. At all events, the commander had a boat in tow, into which part of the crew climbed, and the remainder, in bathing rig, were in the water, hanging on to rope-ends attached to the ship. The enemy had not discovered me,

thanks probably to the sunken ship which was hiding me ; and as a matter of fact they neither fired a single shot at me nor caught me with their searchlights once. Meanwhile the disaster was growing worse. The four other ships, thinking that the position to port was the most dangerous, manœuvred with the intention of going to starboard ; but I do not think they knew what they were doing, for, even if they had not been under a heavy fire, they could not have reached the channel in this manner.

It is impossible to entrust lieutenants with operations of such importance. Even admitting that they are very capable and have the best intentions in the world, they lack the requisite experience.

The second steamer, which had come on, was struck by a projectile from the coast battery on the left shore, owing to the fact that she had left her stern exposed when altering course. In addition to this, her engines could not have worked well, for she could not continue her course, and remained on the sand very near the first one.

We tried to approach to save the crew—but it was impossible, as the coast batteries kept up

an incessant fire, and on the other side we were threatened by the danger of three Russian cruisers which were coming right on to us. I think that one of them was the *Novik*. She was curiously shaped, like a big destroyer, and I recognised her funnels. We dashed away as fast as possible ; but one of our boats was struck, and, I think, sunk. She must have been one of the Second Division, for ours was complete

It is a wonderful thing, and seems incredible, that one should be indifferent and stoical in the face of such occurrences. When, on February 8th, I saw the *Shirakuma* sink in the same spot, I felt a depressing sensation, for I realised that a similar fate might overtake me. As soon as the first impression has passed away, an indifference remains, and though one may be absolutely certain that one is going to perish alone or with one's ship a few moments later, or be slain by a shell, one remains as calm as possible.

In the faces of my men I read that they thought and felt thus, and that they had become as hardened as myself. The Russian cruisers showed little skill, for they ought to have made a clean sweep of us ; when manœuvring inside the roadstead they were afraid to come too near

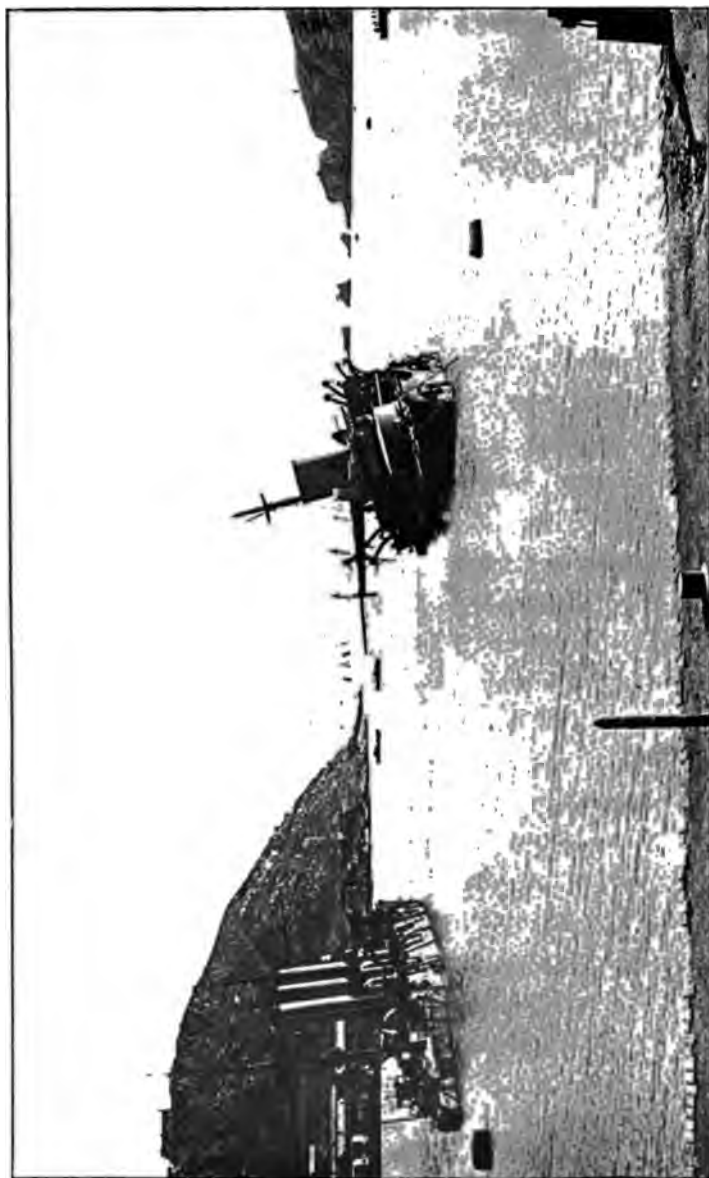
the shore, which they approached with the utmost caution.

We had separated, or rather, I should say, each one was working on his own account, and I was trying to reach the roadstead again in order to discharge a torpedo at the *Retvisan* and see if I could save the crews of the steamers.

I should have liked to attack one of the cruisers, but it was impossible, as they were very alert and made most excellent use of their searchlights ; besides, it was beginning to get light, and it was necessary for us to retire.

Some miles from the roadstead we found the whole squadron, and received orders to make straight for the Elliott Islands to coal from the ships which were there. When we arrived I had the disagreeable surprise of seeing that my boat was badly damaged in the bows, and that it was necessary to take her at once to the dockyard. I very much doubt her being able to reach Sasebo without aid. The last repairs were done too hurriedly, and without care. The two fore compartments are very weak, and I shall not be able to go fast for fear of increasing the damage.

The *Shinonome* has just arrived with some of those who were wrecked on the steamers ; the



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SUNKEN TRANSPORTS IN HARBOUR ENTRANCE. WRECKED WARSHIPS IN FOREGROUND.





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poor wretches have endured terrible hardships. They have been exposed night and day, in an open boat, to hunger, cold, and exhaustion.

The venture could not have turned out worse. All the steamers, except two which remained on the beach, were sunk, and the crews were only saved with great difficulty.

Nevertheless it is strange that the fugitive boat was not discovered. She came along hugging the coast all the time, and the Russians thought that they had all perished with their ships.

Our Commander emphatically asserts that we are going to repeat the performance and that the Admiral is going to persist in it. I do not think that it will meet with success.

I have had to report the damage on board my boat, which made me feel very sad. It is not very pleasant remaining inactive, now that there is so much to do. But on the other hand, there is no point in sailing with a damaged boat, with the probability of sinking or being sunk before getting within torpedo range.

To-morrow a destroyer goes to the squadron to take a detailed account of the operations of the night of the 24th to the Admiral. At the same time she will carry news of the damage to my

boat. I have written to the Chief of the Staff to ask him to allow me to embark in the *Fuji*, whose repairs must now be finished.

Sasebo, March 2nd.

At midday to-day I arrived with my crippled vessel, towed by a collier. The voyage was not very agreeable ; the roughness of the sea and the frequent parting of the tow-rope did not allow us to rest for a moment, at a time when we most needed it.

All my crew are in the worst possible temper, in view of the days of inactivity which await us ; but there is no other remedy than to put up with it, for there is no spare boat here, and we shall have to wait till the *Akasuki* is ready. My thoughts coincide with theirs.

Nor was it very pleasant for me when all the people collected at Sasebo asked me in which fight my destroyer had sustained her injuries, whether I had made a successful attack, and questions of that sort, and I had to answer that I have not taken part in any real battle, and that I have not been struck by a projectile, but that my boat cannot move. I know that it is not my fault, but that does not prevent its being a

nuisance. It was a good opportunity to curse the workmen in the dockyard, and cast their bad repairs in their teeth.

To resume: we are all in the worst tempers possible, and for the present cannot see the slightest glimmer of light ahead. Only to think that the others will be making a glorious and decisive attack, and that I am condemned to contemplate my *Akasuki*, which has become a positive encumbrance! It is enough to drive one crazy! I feel like turning into a Christian from sheer rage!

What is the good of getting angry? I had better go to sleep.

Sasebo, March 6th.

There has been another fight. There seem to have been losses; but nothing is known here, and the whole truth is never told. It is a pity; but when all is said and done, we, both men and ships, are here for the same reason, namely, that our superiors may make whatever use of us seems best to them.

Not only on account of my exhortations, but because all the destroyers want a lot doing to them, the dockyard hands work night and day

60 BEFORE PORT ARTHUR

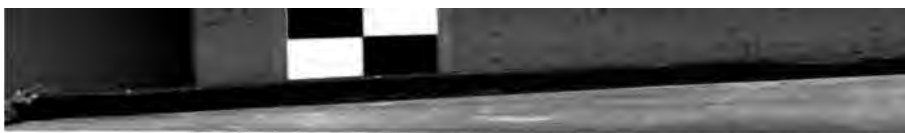
to put my *Akasuki* in order. The repairs will last for a short campaign—at least, so I hope ; if afterwards they break down, we will do them again.

I think that in a few days we shall put to sea.

Sasebo, March 13th.

Since yesterday evening I have been here again undergoing repairs. And now it will be rather a bigger business, but this time my boat has done good work. Only one thing saddens me and spoils my pleasure—the fact that I have lost two of my men, one of them my best petty officer. I also have been wounded ; a fragment of shell grazed my left fore-arm, tearing out a piece of flesh. Fortunately neither the bone nor the arteries have been touched ; but I have lost a lot of blood, and am compelled to carry my arm in a sling. But this will not stop me being the first to resume duty on board the *Akasuki*.

The operations were a success, and although the result is not of great importance, yet I can say that I have had the good luck to get nearer the enemy than most naval officers of the present



SUBMARINE MINES

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day. My men and I are continually discussing it: one relates how he wounded a Russian in the head, another how he threw one of the enemy into the sea, or God knows where—perhaps into the heaven which those lucky mortals seem always to have at their disposal. One of the stokers used a steel hammer from the engine-room as a weapon of offence.

But I must tell the story of these operations in due order and clearly; they are so interesting and, as far as I am concerned, unforgettable.

Admiral Togo, at midday on the 9th of March, informed the squadron and the destroyers of his intention to bombard Port Arthur as usual with indirect fire at ten o'clock in the morning.

The First and Second Divisions of destroyers had to place submarine mines in the roadstead and its immediate neighbourhood, on the night of the 9th. Each of us from midday onwards had six mines on board, and I must confess that we did not feel much enthusiasm for our task.

Mine-laying is not a pleasant duty, and it is very dangerous to handle these contrivances. Our ships were not arranged for the reception of such guests and the men had no practice in handling them, so that the same fate which overtook the

Russians with their *Yenisei* * might happen to any one of us.

I must add that we had to lay the mines in the dark, and if one is not very alert one runs the risk of coming into contact with one of them, without the consolation of going to the heaven of the Russians.

About midnight, accompanied by the squadron, we reached a point about five miles from the promontory of Liautishan, where some of the boats went off towards the promontory, while we continued towards the roadstead to place submarine mines across the mouth of the channel, if we could. Circumstances could not have been more favourable: the night was dark, and the sea very calm.

We had hopes of meeting one of the enemy's big ships and being able to attack her; but the roadstead was completely deserted, and not even a tiny patrol-boat could be seen. Our division sailed in a body, and, very wisely, the Commander did not hug the coast as we had always done previously, but made straight for the mouth of

* On February 11th, 1904, the Russian mining transport *Yenisei* collided with a mine which exploded under her bows, causing the vessel to sink with a loss of ninety-six of her crew.

the channel from the open sea. Everything seemed to presage a good result ; the only thing which worried us was that we could not see lights of any kind either in the town or in the harbour, and the intense darkness prevented us from distinguishing the outlines of the coast.

We had to judge by our watches and the current—the tide had begun to flow—and make our calculations. Our chief, concluding that we had now reached the pre-arranged spot, gave the signal to separate ; his destroyer stayed in the centre, I turned to port, and the *Usugumo* to starboard.

We began the operation of laying mines successfully, and I had scarcely placed one when suddenly the Russian searchlights from both shores flared out, and a second afterwards the coast batteries opened a heavy fire on us. As the distance was very great the fire was not accurate, anyhow at first ; some shells fell short, others over : meanwhile I went on quietly placing the mines. I was consumed by impatience at the slowness of the operation, but my men did all in their power, and more than this it was not possible to ask of them.

It was not very amusing lying there almost

motionless, with the prospect of a shell dashing us into a thousand pieces; besides which, with our want of practice, it was probable that our work would turn out a very "amateurish" affair. I should certainly not like to assure Admiral Togo on my word of honour that I had placed the mines at the correct depth, and that the anchors had taken hold. It is more probable that one or two of them, as often happens, are floating at liberty over the waves, and have become as dangerous customers for us as for the Russians. At last we finished our difficult task, and about five o'clock in the morning, when day was breaking, we started out of the roadstead.

By a miracle my boat had suffered no damage, but my two companions had not been so fortunate.

On board the *Shinonome* the bridge was a heap of ruins, the funnels were perforated, and the deck in the worst possible condition.

The *Usugumo* could hardly steer at all, and I concluded that her steering gear had broken down and that she had to manage with the reserve rudder, as afterwards proved to be the case. For this reason the unfortunate boat went wobbling along from side to side. Luckily all our engines were in good condition, and we slid out to sea like eels.



BOMBARDING THE HARBOUR 65

We were occupied for a long time with our mines, and meanwhile saw the flashes and heard the roar of the guns in the direction of Liautishan.

By the rapidity of the fire, evidently from small guns, it was obvious that the First Division of our destroyers had come into action. With whom? we asked ourselves. Not with the coast defence vessels, for these would have discovered us first; and moreover, as it was impossible that ships of this kind had gone far from the roadstead, the only possibility that remained was that they were Russian destroyers which had gone out into the open sea to look for our squadron and attack it. Our Commander ordered us to turn our bows in the direction of the firing; for besides the wish to take part in the action, we wanted above all to help our companions.

Suddenly, although we could not quite see them, we could hear the firing of guns from the coast batteries, and could see the searchlights flashing.

Our squadron, with the idea of provoking a "sortie" on the part of the Russians, had begun a bombardment of the city and harbour. Shortly afterwards the firing stopped, and my crew and I had already lost all hope of an encounter with

the enemy when, by the light of day, which was beginning to break, we saw two Russian vessels which were making for the mouth of the roadstead at full speed. We hastened in that direction to cut them off. I ordered all my guns to be loaded, ammunition got on deck, and everything to be prepared for action, when the two Russian ships separated, one of them having evidently sustained serious injuries.

The *Usugumo* and the *Shinonome* dashed at one, and I at the other.

When she saw that her slow speed precluded all chance of escape—for, in spite of her repeated and, I must confess, skilful alterations of helm, I continued to obstruct her passage—she decided to make a fight of it.

She turned on me suddenly with the evident intention of ramming me, in which she would probably have succeeded if my engines had not worked very well.

I gave the signal for "full speed ahead" and turned the boat slightly to starboard, making her describe a circle and placing myself between the boat and Port Arthur. Then I ordered all my guns to open fire; the enemy had commenced firing a little before.

I had given my gunners the order to aim particularly at the 7·5-cm. gun. After putting it out of action I turned my attention to the others, and lastly to the bridge.

We were a hundred metres apart, going along on parallel courses and firing away without a pause.

Apparently the Russians had suffered great losses, for the 7·5-cm. gun was being fought by an officer, and the working of the others had been entrusted to stokers, judging by their grimy faces. In spite of this they fired rapidly and accurately, and it really was a miracle that the engines and boilers of my boat came out of it undamaged, these delicate parts not being protected sufficiently to withstand anything but 4·7-cm. shells.

The petty officer who was on the port side was struck by one of these, which, after destroying the railings, burst in the coal bunker ; a fragment of shell which hit him on the head subsequently killed him.

I could not stand my somewhat passive duty, so I ran to the 7·5-cm. gun and began to work it; but not for long, for we soon dismounted theirs, and the enemy had now nothing left but guns of small calibre—4·7-cms. I believe.

It is difficult to get a proper idea of that fight, and when I think of it it seems to me like a dream, or rather like a nightmare the impression of which remains with one for a long time, even after waking up.

The indescribable noise, the incessant roar of our guns so close to our ears, the bursting of the enemy's projectiles on contact with the water or with our boat, and above all the exhaustion, physical and mental, produced by that din and by the rapidity with which the guns were loaded and fired—all these are things to which we paid not the slightest attention during the excitement.

We were sweating all over in spite of the intense cold, and it was lucky that we were so near the enemy, for otherwise—I ought not to say this, although it is true—my gunners would never have hit their target.

I will not say that my crew would have behaved like the Chinese in the war of '94, who, instead of resting their guns against their shoulders, rested them against their stomachs, shut their eyes, and fired ; certainly it did not get to this pitch, but they did not aim with precision, and I seem to have seen a man cursing a 4·7-cm. gun,

as though it were to blame for not having hit the mark. A shell from the enemy dismounted one of the 4·7-cm. guns in the after part of the boat, blowing up a case of ammunition and putting all the people who were manning it *hors de combat*.

I had succeeded with my 7·5-cm. gun in planting two shells one after the other, not far from the water-line, into the engine-room. I saw a great column of thick steam escaping and some men trying to get away. These we were killing and wounding with deadly aim. It was indeed a sight which is seldom seen at sea, and from which one derives peculiar gratification—fighting against men full of vitality instead of inert steel.

At that moment an idea seized me. I left the gun in charge of a petty officer and manœuvred the boat so as to get her as near as possible to the enemy, who was, as a matter of fact, so crippled that she could not escape: steam was coming out everywhere, fire was only being maintained by a single 4·7-cm. gun, and the torpedo-tubes had been destroyed, without our getting the hoped-for result of an explosion; charges of gun-cotton also were burning with a brilliant flame without doing any harm. When I was about fifty metres away I gave the order

“Prepare to board!” or rather tried to give it, for it was impossible to make myself heard; but my men have got so accustomed to these manœuvres that hardly had they heard the whistle than they were ready for anything that might turn up. I whistled as though I had half a dozen pairs of lungs, drew my cutlass, and waved my arm in the direction of the Russian boat, pointing from bow to stern, so as to show that I wanted every one to be ready, as we should soon be able to board. Loud shouts of delight came from my crew when my order was understood, and they all seized hold of hook-ropes, waving their cutlasses and brandishing their loaded revolvers.

I warned the men in the engine-room to be ready to come up, except a few who were wanted below. Almost immediately afterwards a death-like and oppressive silence succeeded the previous great uproar; on board the Russian boat not a single shot was being fired, and not a living soul could be seen on the deck. Naturally we also had ceased firing.

It is not likely to happen again that a destroyer commander will be able to approach a hostile vessel in this fashion, and I can never forget my sensations as we climbed up and set foot on her deck.



"I DREW MY CUTLASS."



Climbing up is hardly the word, for my men went bounding along like wild beasts, with myself at their head.

There was nothing to stop us. On the deck lay stretched thirty or forty dead or seriously wounded, many of them horribly mutilated; and lying about the place were arms, feet, a head, a heap of entrails. . . . But nothing could upset us, and my crew turned the corpses over and over to convince themselves that death was real and not feigned. I could not believe that every one had perished, for that boat must have had at least forty-five men on board, and on deck there were only about thirty; two wounded men fell into the water, but were rescued and made prisoners. In the fo'c'sle there was nobody. One of my seamen came running up in a great state of excitement and told me that the stern hatchway was closed, and that doubtless the rest of the crew would be found down below. Meanwhile the boat began to sink slowly, and if it had not been secured to mine it would have foundered quickly.

I hoped by explaining this to compel the commander to surrender or else to make him prisoner by main force, and for this reason we went down

the after hatchway into the cabin, cutlass and revolver in hand. Hardly had we started when two revolver bullets grazed my head and buried themselves in the bulkhead. Without seeing anything I instinctively aimed low, fired a shot and leaped back, colliding with my men, who were following very close behind.

Suddenly the door of the cabin opened from inside, without our being able to see in. The senior petty officer dashed in blindly like a wild beast, and a second afterwards fell with his head blown off. Our situation, to tell the truth, was not a pleasant one, for on such a narrow ladder it was impossible to show a larger front than one man, and those in the cabin could put an end to us one by one.

We contented ourselves with discharging our revolvers, and my pilot went on deck, where he proceeded to remove the hatch of the cabin, which made it quite easy to open fire on those down below.

The Russians would in the end have had to come out so as not to be shot in the back, but their fire ceased owing to lack of ammunition, and we were able to approach them. I took with me the stoker with the steel hammer, whom I mentioned before.



THE END OF THE FIGHT 73

No sooner had I reached the bottom of the ladder than some one with a drawn cutlass sprang at me. I was able to ward off the blow, and in my turn attacked him and felled him to the ground. I then saw that he was the commander. We killed half a dozen of the others, and the last two, slightly wounded, surrendered. When we had finished this important task—in the end one becomes so bloodthirsty that one feels a cruel disappointment at not meeting with more resistance when only dead men or prisoners are left—we saw that we had only arrived in the nick of time, for those gallant fellows had been preparing to blow up their boat.

On the floor were dynamite cartridges and other explosives besides the heads of two torpedoes, which altogether would have been enough to make dust of us. Whilst I was quietly looking through the commander's cupboard and desk to see if I could come across any secret documents, instructions, or money, my engineer from on deck began to sing out that the boat was about to sink, and that we ought at all costs to take refuge on the *Akasuki*. I quickly seized what I could and dashed up. I was not a little horrified when I saw my boat on the point of capsizing, having been dragged over by

the Russian destroyer. In less time than it takes to tell we leaped on board, and with two smart strokes of our axes severed the hawsers securing the two craft. The *Akasuki* righted herself, and the Russian boat went rapidly to the bottom. When the upper works were hidden, and nothing more could be seen of the unfortunate boat, the whole crew burst into joyful shouts, and I myself joined in the chorus with my whole heart.

My subordinate's idea of taking the flags as soon as we had boarded the Russian boat, gave me immense pleasure. It was a thing I had forgotten to do, and he now presented them to us as actual trophies of our victory while the crew, and I also, were celebrating our success.

Now, as I read over this description of the fight, it seems to have taken an endless time, yet I do not think in reality it lasted more than a quarter of an hour.

One thing is certain, that no one took the trouble to look at his watch at the time; but when I think over the various incidents—first, the fight with the guns till we boarded, then from the actual boarding till the fight in the cabin, then from this point to the sinking, all this cannot have lasted more than a quarter of an hour, and perhaps less.

No sooner had the enemy's destroyer sunk and I returned to my bridge, than I saw our cruisers about 600 metres away, and behind them all the rest of the squadron. So absorbed had we been in our encounter that we had paid no attention to the events of no small importance to ourselves which were happening around us, and up till then we had not noticed that our cruisers were bombarding Port Arthur.

I heard afterwards that what happened was as follows. When Admiral Makharoff was able to see, at dawn of day, that his destroyers were in grave danger, he hoisted his admiral's flag on board the *Novik*, and put to sea at full speed to save his boats, firing on us and driving us back. And he could have fired with impunity at my boat, for both my crew and myself were much too busy to notice anything.

But the Russians reckoned without Admiral Togo, who was waiting with all the squadron not far from the roadstead. The latter, as soon as he saw the *Novik* come out, sent half a dozen cruisers to protect our retreat. When I had discovered this, the *Novik* had retired. I tried in vain to find the other two destroyers which had been accompanying me, and learned afterwards

that they had had a fight with the *Reshitelny* without being able to prevent her getting into the harbour.

Naturally I cannot judge of what I did not see, but it seems to me that even if the *Reshitelny* had her boilers and engines in perfect condition, she ought not to have escaped. There were two boats, and double the number of guns, against a single vessel.

One of the two cruisers, I cannot remember which, signalled to me to report my losses and damage. I answered briefly, "Two men dead, six wounded, and my boat still under control."

To tell the truth, I could not make certain of this last fact, but anyhow it was accurate enough, for the boilers, engines, and rudder were intact ; but on the other hand, the rest of the boat presented a deplorable aspect. The mast was blown to splinters, and it is strange that an object which presents so small a mark should always come to grief by night as well as by day.

Other projectiles had brought down the bridge and damaged the after torpedo-tube ; fragments of shell had penetrated the deck and conning-tower, but this damage was of small importance.

The Russians must have worked their 7.5-cm.



gun very badly, before we dismounted it, for only one of their shells had pierced our bows, a few feet above the water-line. I noticed that coal formed excellent protection, for all the small-calibre shells which exploded in the coal-bunkers were, with one exception, perfectly innocuous.

The same result would not have occurred with shells of larger calibre. I had the luck to put the 7.5-cm. gun speedily out of action, thanks to the fact that I concentrated the whole of the fire from my boat upon it, but even so it was a marvel that I got out of it so well. There is no doubt that I owe to luck more than to merit the fact that I was bombarded and fought on an unarmoured vessel and lost only four men altogether. But as luck in the long run only goes to people endowed with good judgment, I believe that my success is owing entirely and exclusively to my excellent manœuvring.

As there is not now in Sasebo any other boat of the squadron but mine, we have to put up with the bother of continuous questioning. My person and my boat are looked upon as remarkable, and the crowd never tires of coming on board at all hours to see, touch, and even smell the flags taken from the Russians.

I am quite sure that if my lieutenant were not careful to calm the most excited, each visitor would take away a piece as a relic !

How can I answer so many questions ? To tell the truth, I am bound to confess that I know nothing or next to nothing ; that I have not got a clear idea of what we and the enemy have done or left undone. We do not pay much attention to the telegrams from the Admiral, for one must remember that the greater part of them are destined for publication. I read the papers with anxiety, and by means of them learn many things which have happened during my stirring cruises.

The thing which worries me most is the question of mails. During the time that I have been away I have only received two letters, and those by chance, when I happened to be near the flagship ; and now here in Sasebo I find a pile of letters, parcels, and papers—all old, dirty, and damaged.

Sasebo, March 15th.

My slight wound has healed—that is to say, that I am more lucky than my boat, which will have to be a long time in dockyard hands. So far I have received no order concerning her ; and in the yard they tell me that, if absolutely

necessary, she could go out in her present condition. The engines, boilers, and rudder are in a fit condition to go into action, and at a pinch in war time one can do without things which are considered essential in time of peace.

They have given us two new torpedo-tubes, a question of a few hours, as well as two new small-calibre guns, and if occasion arises I am ready to start. If this were peace time I should be anxious about the frail state of the hull, for it is certain that with bad weather and a heavy sea there would be a repetition of what happened when my damages had not been well repaired, and I could not return to Sasebo alone, but had to be towed. Now, naturally, I must hold my tongue, though should we experience bad weather we are likely to sink.

Sasebo, March 16th.

Now they do not want my boat to go out because, they say, she is not needed. On the other hand, there are several repairs to be done. The bottom requires cleaning again, some boiler-tubes which were leaking have to be changed, and I don't know how many other things.

They are quite right. But I do not like standing here with my arms folded, watching them repairing

my boat. I have left no stone unturned to get them to give me another one. The worst one possible would be a God-send to me. But at present it is impossible.

Sasebo, March 18th.

The flagship has been here for one day only, and I repeated my petition for the hundredth time to the Chief-of-Staff.

The *Fuji*, the bird of ill omen of the squadron, is being repaired here, and has lost one of her officers. To-morrow she sails, and I am glad to say I am to sail in her.

Sasebo, March 19th.

A ray of light in the darkness! I have just been to the *Fuji*, introduced myself to the captain, and have received an affectionate letter from the Chief-of-Staff in which he tells me that, thanks to my exceptional behaviour on the night of the 8th of February, they are going to give me command of my boat again—when she is ready—or of another like her. I do not owe any thanks to the commander of the *Fuji* for my appointment; I have been able to discover that. He is glad to have another

officer, especially as some of his have had to be landed sick. But the commander is one of those men who look upon destroyer commanders as troublesome, presumptuous people. Moreover, it does not please him that I should be a bird of passage. Anyhow, I don't care what he thinks or does. To-morrow we start, and I replace the sick officer who commanded the after battery.

Yellow Sea, March 20th.

What a difference one finds, when one goes from a destroyer to a large battleship! It seems strange to move so slowly when one is accustomed to go so fast.

All the officers are complaining of the Admiral. They say, and I agree with them, that after the attack on the 8th, Togo ought to have sailed immediately with the whole of the squadron to the roadstead of Port Arthur, and when he had got as near as he could, to have opened fire. The Russians were not ready, and it is said that most of the officers were on shore. The first officer of the *Fuji* kept me with him all day to tell him the events of that night in detail without omitting anything.

Togo did not know how to take advantage of

the situation ; he ought to have sent out to the fight not only his battleships, but also his destroyers. What could have stopped him ? No Russian ship could have offered serious resistance. They would all have been taken by surprise, unprepared for the conflict and incapable of manœuvring.

Naturally we should not have taken Port Arthur, for we were not carrying men whom we could have landed, and we could not use the crews of the ships. But it is probable that we should have been able to destroy the battleships and cruisers which were in the roadstead.

What a glorious victory ! Certainly it would have cost us dear. But why not ? To win, in war, one must alway risk something. A gunner of the *Fuji* remarked that the operation was impossible because of the coast batteries of Port Arthur. But neither the first officer nor I shared this opinion. As a matter of fact, on that night the coast fortifications would not have been ready or manned. It is probable that the greater part of the garrison was quietly asleep in the town. Moreover, the fight must have taken place in the inner roadstead and very far in, and I believe that the field of fire of the greater part of the land

batteries is over the outer roadstead, and only a few have got the special function of defending the mouth of the harbour. It must be added, in our favour, that our ships being close to and mixed with the Russian vessels, it would have been a somewhat difficult problem for the gunners on shore to open fire, because they might just as easily have sunk their ships as ours.

It is to be hoped that the inactivity of the Admiral that night will not be repeated. All naval history goes to prove, and the English in some measure also teach us, that only an attack delivered with energy and determination can be successful. I do not think that Nelson with his squadron would have remained inactive before Port Arthur, as Togo did.

It is no good getting angry about what is already done with, but it is certain that a chance like the one we had on the 8th of February will never come back again.

March 20th, night.

I have been very busy all day, for I have had to look into a number of things. The captain thinks that one of these days we shall bombard Port Arthur with the whole squadron, and there

are many preparations to be made now that I have to direct the fire of a heavy gun, with which I have not only to shoot but also to hit. The crew is excellent, and a spirit that cannot be improved upon reigns among them, just as on board a destroyer.

All want to see the enemy as soon and as close as possible. A petty officer of my battery opines that long-distance bombardments are no use whatever, giving very plausible reasons for this ; but the discussion is useless, as to-morrow is the day agreed upon. A quarter of an hour ago we came in sight of the squadron, and by means of wireless telegraphy received a long message giving us instructions.

The destroyers are to attack to-night, and at the first break of dawn we are to begin the bombardment.

The captain thinks that Togo's intention is to make the Russian squadron believe that a decisive attack is imminent, and thus compel them to remain where they are or in the roadstead, without letting any vessels go out. For these, if they made a sortie, might give trouble to our First Army, which to-morrow morning has to disembark at Chemulpo.

A couple of Russian cruisers or destroyers in these waters could, at the cost of their own lives, cause us considerable loss.

Yellow Sea, March 23rd and 24th.

The bombardment took place, and the poor *Fuji* has come out of it somewhat damaged. And she is not alone in this, for the *Asahi* and a small cruiser, whose name we do not know, were on the point of foundering. This is what happened.

As was to be expected, the destroyers which made an attack the night before met with no success ; and this was not surprising, for, besides the *Retvisan*, which always remains at the entrance of the harbour, like an advanced battery, a patrolling service has been organised by means of cruisers and the coast batteries, which keep continually searching the roadstead with their searchlights ; so what possible chance is there for a destroyer to be successful ?

The *Retvisan*, the only objective of importance in the roadstead, cannot be approached, and there are no other ships to attack.

Does Admiral Togo by chance think that the destroyers ought to go through the channel and get into the interior of the harbour ?

Probably he does, for I believe that he has never commanded a destroyer.

After the destroyers had withdrawn to the proximity of the battleships, and had received orders to go to the island of Miaotao, the squadron advanced.

The *Fuji* and *Yashima* were ordered to leave the squadron and to get into position behind the promontory of Liautishan, whence they could open high-angle fire on the city and harbour. The Admiral wanted to distract the Russian fire and bring the hostile batteries into a state of confusion.

Our ship and the *Yashima* anchored behind the Liautishan Cliffs, aiming very high, in fact as high as possible ; and with the chart and our range tables we worked out how to hit our invisible target.

I felt as though I had gone back to the days of my childhood, when I used to throw pebbles over a house to hit some man whom I knew to be at work behind it.

We had not yet opened fire, for we had to anchor, when suddenly a heavy projectile came whistling through the air apparently some hundreds of metres away, and buried itself shrieking

in the water. It did not burst as it would probably have done had it been direct fire, and we were able to make sure that the Russians were attacking us with high-angle fire, having seen that we were detaching ourselves from the main body of the squadron.

A few minutes later another projectile fell a little further off, and then we opened fire.

We and the *Yashima* fired alternately, and we had agreed to keep one section always under fire, taking those given on the plans and charts of the interior harbour, city, and forts of Port Arthur.

It must be remembered that ships' guns, and these in particular, are not made for high-angle fire, and in the long run cannot stand it.

At each round the shock was really colossal; and this was natural, for the higher the muzzle of the gun is, the more directly is the recoil transmitted downwards, to which must be added the force of gravity acting on a huge mass like a gun.

To our great surprise, after the second shot a telegraph clerk came up with the following telegram from the cruiser *Akashi*: "Shot No. 3, nearly 500 metres over, lateral direction apparently good." This was an excellent idea, for

now at any rate we knew how to aim, and could correct the mistakes we made. A brilliant idea on the part of Admiral Togo. To carry it out he had placed some cruisers a long way off, and in front of the roadstead of Port Arthur, to observe how our shells were falling, and to transmit the result to us by telegraph, so that we could correct our aim.

After a shot from the *Yashima* came a telegram saying, "Shot fell in the town ; continue." The *Yashima* at once telegraphed to us with what elevation she had fired and the exact lateral direction, and we at once opened a furious fire with guns of all sizes—the whole ship vibrated, and the crew worked away madly, sweating copiously, and so fast that the new rounds were ready before the guns had been fired.

Our only trouble was to stop the guns being loaded too quickly. I always had my guns sponged out after every shot, for sometimes remnants of gunpowder remain burning, and when the breech is opened the draught is capable of turning it into a large flame and causing a serious disaster. But the crew did not mind this, and would have liked, under the circumstances, to have shot faster and not to have taken these

precautions. They all worked like slaves, their voices hoarse, their mouths dry, and their faces all covered with a grey coating of smoke and sweat.

I was thinking how lucky it was that no shot from Port Arthur had struck us, when a loud whistling rent the air, a terrible roar deafened me, thick yellow smoke swallowed me up completely, and a great flame rose up to the blue sky. I think I wanted to shout "To the shore!" but I cannot be certain if I really said it.

When I recovered consciousness I was in the sick bay, with ice on my head; the doctors told me that a shell had landed between the after turret and the middle line of the ship. I had no actual wound, but had been hurled against the mounting of a gun by the great rush of air, and had hurt my head slightly. I was soon well enough to get up, though I felt somewhat sick, and my head seemed to be spinning round.

The *Fuji* had weighed at once, for the shell had done a great deal of damage. The deck was torn up and in some places completely destroyed. Of twelve men who had been working on the lower deck, the greater number were blown to pieces by the explosion, and the remainder

seriously wounded. Clots of blood and brains could be seen on the deck and bulkheads. Some bits of the shell went through the lower deck and penetrated into the interior of the ship, without apparently doing much harm. There was a large irregular hole in the deck, and part of the woodwork had caught fire. It was very lucky that the shell—which was one of 30·5 cms.—had not fallen on the barbette of my guns, otherwise the damage would have been greater. The barbettes, as on all battleships, are not made to resist a plunging fire, and there is no doubt that the armour would have been destroyed. Thus not only my gun crews and I, but also my guns would have been put out of action.

To put a finishing touch on our misfortunes, the ammunition which we had got ready for the guns had exploded. In spite of all this we ought to be thankful on the whole.

The captain telegraphed by means of the *Yashima* to Admiral Togo, who ordered us to suspend the bombardment at once and to rejoin the squadron. It seemed a long way to us. Our spirits were somewhat damped, for it was impossible to shut our eyes to the damage which we had sustained, the destruction of a

few houses in Port Arthur being but poor compensation.

The poor mutilated corpses and limbs scattered about the deck were collected, sewn up in a sack with a sinker, and committed to the deep.

We felt infinite pity for those unfortunate men ; but such is war ! and Russia will have to pay us a hundredfold for our losses.

We soon came in sight of the squadron, which had a short time before suspended the bombardment and was making for the island of Miaotao.

One can hardly realise how long the foul gases produced by a shell-explosion linger in a confined space. For some hours afterwards it was impossible to remain below deck, in spite of water, liberal ventilation, and everything else that could be done to clear the atmosphere.

We were about five miles from the squadron, when the chief engineer rushed up to the captain with important news. The first officer was immediately called, and soon we all knew that we had sprung a serious leak. Some large fragments of shell, after having destroyed the central part of the ship between the upper and lower decks, had reached the side, and made a hole several feet in diameter below the water-line.

As it had not been noticed at first, the water had been pouring in for an hour, and it took some time to ascertain the exact extent of the damage. The water-tight doors had been hermetically closed before this happened, so that the extent of the inundation was of necessity limited. In spite of this the pumps could hardly lessen the amount of water, which poured in in torrents. The ship was in no serious danger, for all that happened was that she heeled over slightly to port and the stern sank. But misfortunes never come singly, and to justify this proverb, an order came from the Admiral, as soon as he heard of the injuries sustained by the *Fuji*, telling us to make for Sasebo on the following day.

No sooner had we resumed our position in the squadron and received this order, than Admiral Togo, with his Chief-of-Staff and flag-lieutenant, came on board to see what damage had been done, and to hear a detailed account of the accident from the lips of the captain. Obviously Togo was not best pleased, but he could blame no one for what had happened, and his amiability even reached the point of telling us that on the whole the shooting had been good, but that he could not make out exactly what the effect of our

fire had been. I had occasion to speak for a few moments to the Chief-of-Staff, and he told me that the accuracy with which the Russian ships had fired was marvellous. This no doubt was one of the results of the excellent commandership of Admiral Makharoff, for since his arrival we had noticed a greatly increased activity in the Russian squadron and general defence of the harbour. He seems to be a very capable man, and I hope and trust that a Japanese shell will very soon prevent him confirming his reputation for intelligence and initiative at our expense.

The Chief-of-Staff told me that the Russians had intercepted the messages which our cruisers were sending us, and this presumably by means of their wireless-telegraphy apparatus. At any rate Makharoff so arranged matters that his cruisers maintained a heavy fire on ours—a fire so intense that it compelled them to withdraw. This explained what had so puzzled us, viz. why the telegrams which at first had been so useful had ceased coming in later, at a time when we most needed them.

Togo never abandoned his idea of bottling up the harbour with steamers and thus being able to keep his ships as far as possible undamaged.

The Chief-of-Staff, to whom I spoke about this business, told me that it was a very good idea, because the probable duration of the war could not be predicted, and there was the danger for us that the Russians would mobilise the Baltic Squadron, which contained six or seven battleships, mostly of recent construction. So, as we possess no fleet in reserve, and our ships will not be any the better for being continually on the move with their engines and boilers under steam, we must shut the door in their faces.

While we were talking, a gunner came up in a great state of excitement, and asked me to be good enough to look at one of my guns. The Chief-of-Staff, who agrees with me that misfortunes never come singly, accompanied me.

In accordance with my orders the guns had just been cleaned, and so bright had they become that they looked like mirrors. But when drying them the gunner had noticed a long and jagged crack, which began close to the rear end of the gun and extended some way down the bore.

I saw at once that it was a matter of grave importance, for every precaution must be taken when these cracks appear. On further examina-

tion I could at once see that the crack was a very deep one.

The Chief-of-Staff, who had served in the artillery, merely glanced at it, and said, "One shot more and it bursts. The barrel of the gun is unserviceable; it must be changed." Here indeed was a real misfortune.

Although there are always spare guns in Sasebo, as it is well known that a heavy gun cannot fire more than 100 to 120 rounds, it is none the less a great nuisance to have to be the first to return to the dockyard, just at the moment when the Russian squadron is showing greater activity than ever, and we could be of use.

To resume, the *Fuji*, black bird of ill omen, will have to remain some weeks in the dockyard at Sasebo. I'm sick of it!

Island of Miaotao, March 25th.

To-morrow the *Fuji* sails. The leaks have been temporarily stopped up with planks, tow, lead, and cement. They were not really serious, and the only reason that so much water came into the ship was that we discovered them too late.

There was a lot of hard work on board getting the gun ready for coming out. This is a very

and these jobs were carried out
ease. I have left the ship. And
the captain to say good-bye
amiable, and said that I was
brought bad luck to his ship.
this for a joke, I thought it as
as he was, to the fortunes of
not control. So I put on a nose
and asked him in a dry tone
fault to find with the way I
duty, or whether there was a
my part. He at once changed
he was joking, and was very
I should have liked to reply
a suitable occasion for such
I was still suffering from the

The crew of the *Fuji* was in
They had before them fifteen
inactivity in the arsenal. When

knocked out ; the other half goes quietly on, and continues fighting as before. At sea, on the other hand, a whole ship is put out of action by one portion being damaged, although every one may be wanting to fight, and may have the opportunity. We depend too much on mechanism, and have become too technical. How much better was war in Nelson's time ! Then every man could show what he was capable of, and ships remained stable and seaworthy even when riddled with holes. Guns could fire an infinite number of rounds without loss of accuracy, whereas nowadays one can hardly fire a hundred before they become unserviceable.

But all these reflections are inopportune and superfluous, for I had better congratulate myself on my good fortune in having received a fresh appointment, and one which far exceeds my dearest hopes.

Once again I am to change ships ! If I go on like this it will really be most extraordinary, and in a couple of months I shall have served in almost every vessel in the squadron.

The day after to-morrow the division of the Destroyer Flotilla to which I belong sails again to try and carry out the old experiment. They

still want to try and close the entrance to Port Arthur with steamers, and have offered me command of one of them. Meanwhile my second in command, a lieutenant very near his promotion, will take command of my boat, though he is not best pleased at this. For the destroyers will not have much to do, their duty being only to accompany us for the purpose of collecting those of the living and dead that they can, and to attract the attention of the shore batteries so that the latter may make targets of them rather than of us.

As we shall probably not meet big battleships in the roadstead, it is not likely that by giving up the command of my destroyer I shall miss the chance of attacking.

I spent the whole day in getting my fire-ship, the *Chiyo Maru*, ready. She is very large, about 2,000 tons, and according to the details which I have got, nearly new. The crew is composed almost entirely of volunteers—twenty-five men all told, of whom eight are stokers and engineers.

What a splendid sight it is to see the number of men who have volunteered for such a dangerous duty ! The time before, one imagined that ignorance of the risk they were running accounted for

the number of volunteers ; but now, after that first attempt, in which two-thirds of the crews perished, it is encouraging in the highest degree to see such eagerness for death.

Would the Russians have done the same ?

No one can deny that when they have received an order, they carry it out without flinching, going whither they are told, perhaps to death ; but their heart is not in it, and they do it like machines, for there is no doubt that the Russians do not and cannot understand our interpretation of the word " patriotism."

Our ships are provided with small-calibre guns, for the advisability of this was shown us by our former attempt. They are quick-firing guns, which though not of much use against the larger destroyers, as they cannot do more than kill some of the crew, yet are of the greatest service against the small boats which carry out the patrolling and reconnoitring duties at night. Besides, the great height of our steamers gives us the advantage of being able to fire down upon torpedo craft, and of concentrating our quick-firing guns on the enemy.

In spite of this I do not feel much confidence in the result of the expedition, nor do I feel very certain of coming out of it alive, though this is

a matter of complete indifference to me. We are here to die for our country, so what is the use of talking about it, since we are all aware of the fact ?

And just as the seamen and stokers struggle with each other in their anxiety to be admitted on board, so do I take command with joy and pride, and once again, with a smile on my face, I shall risk my life for the greatness of Japan.

There is such a huge quantity of ammunition and explosives on board that I feel as though I were commanding an enormous infernal machine. The hold is quite full of stones and cement, and on the top of this a great quantity of explosives manufactured and prepared in the arsenal.

These materials will float when the ship sinks, and will set fire to everything with which they come in contact. All this is on the assumption that the steamers are sunk in the manner we intend, and not at the will of the enemy.

As soon as we get to the exact spot where we are to sink them, I shall have the dynamite cartridges, which are at the bottom of the ship, exploded, some by electricity, and others by means of small fuses which will be lit by my men. Before this the valves at the bottom will have been opened, and then, *Sauve qui peut !*

ON THE EVE OF ADVENTURE 101

By the tests and calculations which I have been making all day, I am certain that the ship will sink at once. There is enough explosive material on board to blow up a battleship. The whole thing seems to me easy of accomplishment, with the exception of the last item in the programme—the *Sauve qui peut!* part. I shall arrange for all my men to be dressed in bathing rig, and we shall tow a small boat. This will be our only hope of salvation unless our destroyers come to our help, as I did with the *Akasuki* on the occasion of the first attempts at closing the harbour.

Very early to-morrow we shall put to sea, four steamers and six destroyers, and a cruiser detached from the squadron will bring us detailed orders.

Undoubtedly Togo, when we have finished the task, will remain behind bombarding Port Arthur.

We have been given an accurate chart of the harbour, on which we are shown the exact spot to sink our boats. A very easy thing to do—on the chart!

Now I must put my diary in a safe place, for I do not want it to be lost if I perish. I shall give it to the commander of the *Miyako*, who will take it to Sasebo where he is going to coal, and there it will be looked after for me.

Sasebo, March 27th.

I am here once more ! I must say I did not think I should ever open my poor old book again !

There is real satisfaction in having taken part in one of those adventures which seldom occur in a lifetime ; and as goodness only knows where I shall be to-morrow, I had better tell the story to-day.

Before beginning I must point out that the command of a destroyer for a long period, especially in war time, and of a transport destined for sinking, are not very good for the health.

Yesterday I looked at myself in a mirror for a long time ; and though I never had any pretensions to being a type of manly beauty, I was disagreeably surprised to see my face thin, full of wrinkles, and as old as though I were fifty. My clothes cover nothing but a skeleton, and my bones are full of rheumatism. If only we could have a little warm weather ! I am not weak or delicate, nor are my crew, but life on a destroyer in winter, with bad food and no sort of comforts, would sap the powers of the strongest in the long run. Besides, this type of vessel is always more



DISCOMFORTS OF THE SEA 103

uncomfortable than the others, and rain, snow, and sea-water combine to make them damp ; in fact, in bad weather there is not a dry spot where one can rest for a moment.

I have had the chance of experiencing this again on board the *Sadzanami*, where I was not very comfortably accommodated, although I owe her an eternal debt of gratitude for rescuing me at a time when I was running great risks of being drowned. Yet I must confess that there is a something in the damp and cold of life at sea which disagrees with everybody in the end.

Our ill-starred attempt took place as follows. I could not have narrated more than the part in which I was concerned, had it not been for what I heard from the commander of the *Sadzanami*.

On the afternoon of the 26th we put to sea. The destroyers were leading while we followed with our steamers, and in this formation we reached the roadstead of Port Arthur at about two o'clock in the morning of the 27th.

As rear-guard to us, and some way off, came the whole squadron, the cruisers first, and then battle-ships. In spite of the darkness of the night they intended, if possible, to open fire on the harbour and houses of Port Arthur, to call attention to

the direction in which we
the roadstead, and we went
other, at seven knots.

I take the liberty of cri
of these arrangements. Th
us alone to get to our objec
sible. As it was we made
if the enemy discovered the
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However, we managed to
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It was about a quarter pas
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out. Probably gunboats,
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guarding the harbour. One
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Nor were we behindhand, and opened fire with all our guns, while we pounded along as fast as our heavy cargoes permitted.

I had taken the helm, and my men, some below and others on deck, were ready to open the valves and make the electric contact which was to blow up the ship when I sounded the siren.

Then ensued some moments of incredible excitement, even greater than that of a torpedo attack, for on this occasion I had to keep all my wits at high tension, so as not to let the right moment for sinking the ship slip by, and we were now approaching the mouth of the harbour. I can frankly confess now that I never saw the entrance at all. It was likely, judging by our watches and maps, that we were at the appointed spot, but we could not tell for certain. The brilliant light of the searchlights, and the flash of the guns ahead and on all sides, excited my nerves to the highest pitch. I felt like a man who suddenly finds himself in a dark room, through the windows of which brilliant rays of light are flashing. Unable to make certain of his whereabouts, he moves along with his arms outstretched, expecting every moment to collide with a wall or piece of furniture.

Anyhow, this uncertainty could not last long,

for the ship which preceded me slowed down, and no wonder, for, as I found out afterwards, she had been struck by a shell which disabled her engines and boilers. I turned slightly to starboard, ordered "full speed ahead," and moved on in front of my luckless companion, hoping that possibly the enemy's attention would be concentrated on her.

Although there was no ship in front of me to obstruct my vision, I could not distinguish any features or objects on shore which would enable me to calculate how far I was off, and whether the course I was steering was the right one for reaching the mouth of the channel. While I was occupied in scanning the horizon, a gunner belonging to the gun on the bridge touched me on the back and made me look to starboard, in which direction he was waving his arm. I thought he was calling my attention to the guns on that part of the shore, for, with that infernal noise going on, nothing could be heard.

But immediately afterwards I saw a destroyer dashing at my ship. She was lit up by a Russian cruiser, for they have not yet learned to work their searchlights properly.

She came along at full speed, throwing up mountains of foaming water.

What was to be done in this perplexing situation ? Should I fly ? Perhaps I could have done this successfully, but if I did I could not have carried out my orders. For it is quite certain that once I strayed from my course I should never find it again, whereas now I could not be more than two minutes away from the appointed spot.

These thoughts, which crossed my mind rapidly, came into conflict with others which urged me to go on towards the boat and try to sink it.

I decided not to alter my course, and at full speed, banging away with all my guns, I kept steadily on.

If, instead of the quick-firing guns, of an obsolete pattern, we had been provided with modern guns of seven or eight centimetres, affairs would have worn a different aspect. What a brilliant idea it was, to give us those useless old encumbrances !

Meanwhile the Russian destroyer kept coming nearer at full speed, and I noticed that she turned suddenly ; she seemed to me to have only one tube in working order.

At the exact moment that she turned I stopped the engines, and then ordered " full speed astern," hoping that the torpedo would cross my bows.

shot.

If the ship had not stopped, it would have struck her between the two boilers. As it was, it struck her between, but my presence in the way prevented it. Without any more explanation of what had happened to the ship, the torpedo must have struck the engine-room and caused the damage, which is not strange, that the ship had not got a chance.

The shock knocked me down and at the same instant I was completely stunned. There was no time for the ship was sinking rapidly on her starboard and settling down. A few minutes later the bridge was under the water, and so did I.

I came to at once and

every one knows the danger of this. As soon as I could breathe comfortably I tried to penetrate the darkness, and saw the boat which we were towing a short way off, half submerged, and leaning over to one side. Owing to the fact that she was attached by a very long rope, she had not yet been dragged down by the steamer.

I swam vigorously towards her and seized her with one hand, while with the other I cut the rope with the knife which, like all our sailors, I carried slung round my neck. The boat at once resumed her normal position. I went on swimming, holding on to the tow-rope with one hand.

At first I meditated climbing into her, but I thought this would be rather a risky proceeding, for I could see Russian destroyers and gunboats not far off.

The firing from the guns went on furiously, and it seemed to me that some of our destroyers were adding to the din. Afterwards I found out that this was the case. My situation began to be most unpleasant. Now and again shells fell in my vicinity, and one fell so close that the splash from it hit me in the face. On all sides destroyers and gunboats were cruising about. Not only would it not have been strange, but it was the

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TERRIBLE MOMENTS

III

physical fatigue. The lower part of my body was almost stiff from the intense cold, in spite of my having done everything in my power to prevent this by means of constantly moving and rubbing my limbs. However, this saved me, for had I remained quiet all the time I should not have been able to make use of my muscles.

My bathing-dress kept out the cold fairly well, and even preserved something akin to warmth in the upper part of my body, in spite of my having been some twenty minutes in the water. This may be a slight exaggeration, for every one knows that time always seems longer than it really is to a man who is waiting and counting the seconds.

Though I was not in as critical a situation as shipwrecked people are always supposed to be in, yet I had to struggle desperately to get into the boat. I tore my hands with the splinters and nails which stuck out everywhere, and which caught in the texture of my dress. This hindered me and added to the difficulties I experienced in getting out of the water. I had to make use of my knife again and cut away everything which hindered my movements. After this I was able to carry out my gymnastic exercises with greater success.

added to those of the past were of stupor, in which countless flashed through my mind. Now on board my destroyer, now board the *Fuji*, now in the d I gave orders, fired my gun, roar of the others.

A violent sensation of cold, constantly increasing, brought me. I realised my actual situation myself along till I was nearly most thwart, while the ice-cold lessly splashing over my face was even colder than the sea. The latter was not very rough, sufficiently so to add to my

Day was breaking, grey, cold off I could make out the vague coast, which showed that I was

the sea got darker every moment, and only here and there gleamed a small speck of foam. The tide continued to run out, which increased my hopes and comforted me, although I was so near the coast.

All the time I kept hoping that one of our destroyers would turn up, either one of those which had taken part in our mad escapade, or one of those which had been searching in the roadstead. For I knew that as soon as it got light, Admiral Togo would order them to look for us.

Every moment it got lighter. I took an oar and tossed it up, securing it to one of the thwarts, like a mast. Unfortunately the mast alone was not sufficient to attract attention, and to the blade I fastened my bathing-dress, as a signal of distress. Of course I now felt the cold terribly; but it was better to shiver for a few hours than to die of hunger or thirst. And by this means I was almost certain to be found.

It was about five o'clock in the morning when I saw a great column of smoke on the horizon. This was evidently our squadron which was coming on to bombard the town, preceded by the cruisers. Soon afterwards, to my great delight, I made out eight or ten smaller columns of smoke, which indicated the presence of our destroyers.

As the ebbing tide had taken me out, following the direction of the roadstead, I had got near the promontory of Liautishan ; so that the cruisers and destroyers in all probability would have to pass very near me.

I had to make the best of the opportunity and make myself as conspicuous as possible. I seized the mast with its improvised flag, stood upon the thwart, and began to wave my only hope of salvation from left to right and right to left, just as the shipwrecked mariner does in a novel.

I was glad to have something to do, for in that critical situation, while I waved my flag for help, I could think of nothing but the joy of being warm, and of eating and drinking once more.

Thus I forgot my adventure, and that under my orders two dozen good men and true had probably lost their lives. Such is war ! One becomes insensible to the sufferings of others as well as to one's own.

One of the destroyers kept drawing nearer. Soon I was discovered, and to prove this fact to me and take me out of my abyss of despair, they began to hoist and dip their ensign. I, my heart bursting with joy at the prospect of once more being warm and procuring something to eat and

drink, answered by hurling my mast with its flag into the water, which described a great curve in the air as they went. A few minutes later the *Sadzanami* came up, two seamen jumped into the boat, made her fast to the destroyer, and rescued me.

Then I realised that my powers of endurance were exhausted and my feet frozen, for unconsciously I had kept them in the water which lay in the bottom of the boat. The commander, my old friend Kurosi, marvelled not a little to see me thus, alone and in such a plight. I kept shivering, and stammered out an anxious appeal for something to eat and drink.

They took me to the cabin, where I was able to refresh myself. I soon felt much better, and began thoroughly to enjoy being on board a destroyer as a passenger. They had picked me up at the very moment when the destroyers had to retire.

Our battleships were some way off the roadstead, and now and again fired a shot with their guns of medium calibre.

The Russians, as has been their invariable custom since Makharoff has been in command, were in the roadstead in order of battle. I could count

five battleships and a certain number of cruisers which came on at full speed. Our cruisers were their objective, and they ignored us humble destroyers.

Naturally we made haste to retire as quickly as possible, so as not to come under the fire of the Russian cruisers, which followed us as fast as they could ; they were, as far as we could make out, the *Askold*, *Novik*, and *Bayan*.

As the distance which separated us was comparatively great, they could not have got nearer than 6,000 or 7,000 metres, in spite of getting the utmost out of their engines ; besides which, our squadron had no real intention of accepting the challenge after the disaster of the night before, and shaped a south-easterly course.

When we were all out of sight of Port Arthur the flagship hoisted the signal " Re-assemble," and by means of wireless telegraphy transmitted a long signal to the squadron. This order was brought to the torpedo-boats, as they had no wireless-telegraphy apparatus.

The *Mikasa*, *Yashima*, three armoured cruisers, two small cruisers, and all the destroyers were ordered to proceed to Sasebo to coal and undergo necessary repairs. The rest of the fleet remained

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as usual on look-out duty before Port Arthur, two cruisers being detached as advanced look-outs. Perhaps some of the battleships may have to cover the disembarkation of troops near Chinampo.

During the voyage to Sasebo we had the opportunity of counting the destroyers, and it is strange, but none the less true, that none of them were sunk or disabled in our night operations; I suppose the Russians devoted their attention to the steamers, and they thus succeeded in sinking them before they got to the entrance, or anywhere near it. The destroyer which attacked my luckless vessel was the *Silny*, but our boats avenged me, for it appears they drove her on to a sandbank, and so prevented her being of any further use.

In the course of the voyage I transferred myself to my *Akasuki*, where most of my effects and baggage were. My lieutenant was delighted and very much surprised when he saw me coming from the destroyer which had rescued me.

He had come to the conclusion that I had gone down with my steamer, like my men, of whom, as far as I knew, not one had been saved; so this would not have been strange.

The *Akasuki* had not had many adventures, but as a matter of fact the lieutenant was not

in a position to say what had happened. In the night three cases of ammunition, which had been carelessly secured, fell on to his head as he came out of the cabin to go on to the bridge, knocking him down and leaving him senseless all night long. The boatswain had to take command, so that my arrival on board was most opportune.

Once again we are at Sasebo. And now both officers and men have got to rest a little, for we are completely exhausted. Presumably the coming of spring will make these adventures at sea more pleasant ; but it must be admitted now, that our strength and powers of resistance are worn out. In spite of every effort, our duty is not done as it used to be, and this is not from any want of will.

My sojourn in the water has not done me much good ; the wound in my back has got worse ; I am feverish, depressed, and feel very ill. I hope I shall be quite well again when operations are renewed.

Sasebo, April 6th.

I feel rather better, but fear that it is only a respite in my illness. However, I am able to take command again. I always feel as though

my boat were a living being, like some proud and noble horse who guesses my intentions and even knows when I am not in full possession of my faculties.

It appears that in a few days we are going to put to sea. We suppose that Togo does not contemplate another attempt at closing the entrance, but he is sure to be devising some other ruse with the help of the Chief-of-Staff.

The doctor has just paid me a visit, and apparently is not very well satisfied with me ; but I asked him to patch me up temporarily, even if he could only guarantee me for a couple of days. I do not want to miss the next operations, especially as there is not a single officer who can replace me in command of the *Akasuki*.

Sasebo, April 8th.

At last we possess a craft which we ought to have had since the beginning of the war—a mine-layer, the *Koryo-Maru*. I have been able to go over her in detail. She was formerly a merchant vessel, and has now been transformed for the purpose of carrying and laying mines. It looks as though waging war with mines is Togo's new programme. Even we destroyers have to carry

mines on board, and appliances to facilitate their management have been made in the dockyard.

The day before yesterday the battleships and cruisers set out to join the squadron. A small cruiser arrived two days ago, bringing orders from the Admiral to get on with the repairs as fast as possible. The officers of the ship say that Admiral Makharoff puts to sea with his squadron nearly every day. A short time ago he was seen near the island of Miaotao ; a few days later at the Elliott Islands ; in fact the Russian fleet is constantly on the move, and is most careful not to be surprised outside the protection of Port Arthur.

Makharoff must have been informed by means of his cruisers that many of our ships left the squadron on March 27th, because he kept making sorties right out to sea all the time that our squadron was too weak to attack him.

All this gives us hopes for the future.

Has the time come at last when we are to have a real fight in which battleships will take part ?

I am an enthusiastic admirer of torpedo-craft, but it is an undoubted fact that they cannot accomplish everything, and a decisive victory, except by some extraordinary chance, can only be won by large battleships.

To be quite truthful, which one can only be when confiding in one's diary, I must confess that up till now we have had incredible luck, and it all springs from a most simple fact—the unpreparedness and faulty organisation on the part of the Russians. This can be seen at once especially as regards their torpedo-craft. For what have the latter done up till now?—nothing. Yet there is no doubt that they could have done the same as we have, and compelled us to take more precautions and employ more of our forces to counteract theirs.

It can be seen now how things have changed since Makharoff took command of the squadron. For this reason I feel sure that something decisive, some operations on a large scale, ought to be brought about, even at the risk of our meeting with defeat. For if the Russians are left in peace like this, they will become more daring, more skilful, and consequently more dangerous, every day.

Yellow Sea, April 10th.

To-morrow night we have got to set out—six ships in all accompanying the *Koryo-Maru*—to lay mines in the roadstead of Port Arthur, and

also in the place where the Russians form up in line of battle when they reply to our bombardment. In itself the idea is not bad, but what is bad is our lack of numbers. In place of a mine-layer and six destroyers, we ought to have six mine-layers, because otherwise we cannot lay mines fast enough.

We shall see—the most important thing is to reach the roadstead and lay our mines without being observed. To-day the weather is lovely, and I suppose it will remain so, but for this sort of work, bad weather is a great assistance.

Yellow Sea, April 11th.

The wishes I expressed yesterday have been realised, for it is raining and a strong wind is blowing.

In the roadstead the sea will be very choppy and the night very dark. A damp cold which penetrates to one's very bones prevails, and I fear that if I am alive to-morrow, I shall have to make a long stay in hospital to get thoroughly cured of my wound. Everything is ready for to-night; my men and I handle the mines as though we had done nothing else all our lives. I think we shall do well—better, anyhow, than

the last time, when none of us knew anything about it.

*Island of Miaotao, April 13th (on board the
"Koryo-Maru").*

It went off splendidly. I must tell the story at length, not hurriedly and carelessly, for the benefit of my beloved relations who some day will read in this diary the principal deeds of the campaign.

The night, as I have said, was dark and wet. At about midnight we reached the roadstead in three divisions, with the *Koryo-Maru*.

As on the former occasion, we began in the centre, so as not to be nearer one shore than the other. In this way there was less probability of our being seen.

The Staff had made out a plan by which each vessel was shown the number of mines she had to lay, and the exact spot in which to lay them.

As I have already said, our object was to lay a number of mines in the position where the Russians always formed up in line of battle to reply to our bombardment.

So as not to hinder each other in the dark, we separated at the very beginning, but still remained

close enough together to be able to concentrate in case of necessity. With my lights carefully covered up, I went to my position at half speed.

Everything was quiet—I am referring to the enemy, for the sea was rough and weather threatening. At one moment I saw a dark shadow pass very near me, obviously a Russian destroyer; but we were not discovered, and went slowly on our way: a few seconds later, and she was swallowed up in the darkness.

The work of laying the mines, which at practice had seemed easy to me, turned out on the contrary to be difficult and tiring, owing to the bad weather and the care which had to be exercised. It was about two when I began the work, and at half-past four, or perhaps a little earlier, I prepared to leave the roadstead. Almost immediately day began to break. The *Koryo-Maru* had naturally finished some time before, and had filled a large part of the roadstead with mines.

I cannot say what the Russians were doing all night, for though the darkness was intense and the weather awful, with rain, snow, wind, and a high sea running, yet I cannot understand why they did not discover us. As a matter of fact not one single destroyer was seen by the enemy.

In compliance with our instructions we proceeded out to sea to the place where the squadron, with cruisers thrown ahead as look-outs, had been awaiting us since dawn.

We now heard that some of our destroyers, viz. those of the Second Division, which had not been with us in the roadstead, had cut off and sunk a Russian destroyer which was running into the harbour.

I will try and explain in detail our position at eight o'clock that morning.

The Third Division of the squadron, composed of six fast cruisers and some divisions of torpedo-boats and destroyers, of which I was one, was in front of the roadstead of Port Arthur.

We saw a Russian destroyer trying to enter the harbour, and of course our boats started off in pursuit.

When Makharoff saw the danger which threatened his destroyer—I do not know for certain what her name was, but they say she was the *Strashny*—he sent to her assistance a powerful cruiser, the *Bayan*. Possibly she may have started off of her own accord, as she was outside the entrance to the harbour. Anyhow, she arrived too late ; their destroyer was already lost, and

our boats had withdrawn under cover of the big cruisers.

And now we noticed great activity on the part of the Russians. Three battleships, three or four cruisers, and a quantity of destroyers came out to meet us. We retired, drawing the Russians after us, till we reached a point about fifteen miles from Port Arthur.

Both we and the cruisers went at such a speed as to ensure our making a good offing and keeping out of range of the enemy. Notwithstanding, they, as well as our cruisers, fired constantly. Our ships, as I heard later, had informed the Admiral by wireless telegraphy that Makharoff was pursuing us and had reached the above-mentioned distance from the harbour.

Soon Togo turned up with his large battleships and the two new armoured cruisers, the *Kasuga* and the *Nisshin*. Of course the Russians did not want to fight far away from the protection of their forts with an enemy so superior in numbers, so they turned round and retired at full speed, succeeding in reaching the shelter of their land batteries before we could get within range.

We advanced all together, I with my usual

audacity in front of every one, so as not to miss any detail of what was happening.

We all thought that the Russians would retire peacefully into the harbour, and little suspected what was about to occur.

I was watching the enemy with my glass. When they reached the roadstead, the *Petropavlovsk* made a signal, whereupon the squadron changed its formation : it seemed as though the ships were altering course and forming line abreast at the same time.

There, in that very spot where the Russian squadron was manœuvring, were our mines. I saw all this distinctly, and must confess that never before have I felt my heart palpitate as on that occasion.

I followed each movement of the enemy's ships with feverish anxiety. They were seeking the shelter of their forts in expectation of our bombardment.

Suddenly I saw a cloud of smoke rise from under the bows of the leading vessel ; first it was white, then yellow, and then turned into a huge red flame.

Instinctively I pointed my telescope to the mast-head, and by the admiral's flag saw that this was

the *Petropavlovsk*. The following remark may seem extraordinary and out of place, but it is a fact that at the moment I could only think of the difference in the time taken by the flash and report of the explosion to reach us.

The flame and yellow smoke had nearly disappeared when the noise, or rather the dull echo of the explosion, followed by several others not so loud, came to our ears.

With my telescope I could see the ship settling down, first by the bows and then to one side.

It all took place with incredible rapidity.

I could see the screws and rudder out of the water. The masts inclined more and more ; the hull kept sinking and getting smaller and smaller, and at last—disappeared.

Thus perished the *Petropavlovsk* ! What a pity that we cannot find out who laid the mine which produced so good a result.

The rest of the ships all launched their boats and hurriedly did all in their power to rescue the victims of the disaster. They may possibly have been successful in this, though it is a matter of indifference to us, provided Makharoff was not among the rescued. His death is of the greatest importance.



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What an extraordinary impression it makes on one to see a powerful battleship like this disappear for ever into the depths of the sea—the whole thing happening in a few minutes from no visible cause. It seemed like a dream, not reality, and produced a cinematograph-like effect on us.

Owing to the distance, as I have already said, the sounds did not reach our ears soon enough for us to connect them with the events which our eyes saw. It is a sight that can never be blotted out of my memory. Every instant the stern rose higher, every instant the mast leaned over more, with the admiral's flag streaming from the mast-head; the yellow smoke, the red flame, the grey water, and far away the high coast line vaguely showing through the damp and rainy atmosphere. In spite of what Makharoff's death means to us, one cannot but deplore the death of so brave a man, falling as he did into a trap.

Everywhere appeared an infinite number of boats and launches, hardly visible to us, which dashed about and ceaselessly continued the search.

Another battleship, the second in the line, unless I am mistaken, must also have come in

contact with a mine, for a second loud explosion could be heard, and I thought I saw her heel over to one side.

I cannot be certain, for the distance was too great for me to see clearly, but I imagined I noticed a good deal of confusion among the Russian ships. They adopted no particular formation, and apparently withdrew in great haste.

I thought that our Admiral ought to have taken advantage of this confusion to bring on an action, but to my great regret he did not do so, and withdrew with the main body of the squadron, leaving the cruisers in their usual position watching the roadstead.

We destroyers received orders to come here to fill up with coal, and the *Koryo-Maru* is going to Sasebo to get more mines ; I have been put on board of her, for I myself am forced to go into harbour for urgent repairs.

My wound will not heal, the edges are inflamed ; I have fever constantly, and must really take myself in hand seriously. It is quite certain that in my present condition I cannot do duty or be of any use at all ; and what is more, I should get worse if I attempted it.



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I have just said good-bye to my crew and my old *Akasuki*. Shall I ever see her again? If I do, I hope that it will be before peace comes, and that I shall be able once more to sail in her to meet the foe. . . . Even writing is hard work, but I wanted at all costs to finish this description of my last adventure now. I shall not be able to do it in hospital.

At Sea, May 13th.

I am completely restored to health, and have taken over command of a new destroyer. I know that this is a good thing for promotion, but the great thing is to get back and take part in the operations.

All through the month which I have spent in the military hospital, the Navy has not had one single important fight, nor attained any decisive result.

After the death of Admiral Makharoff one battleship and two cruisers which had been slightly damaged returned to Sasebo. Admiral Togo knew perfectly well that once the Russians were deprived of an enterprising leader, who inspired confidence in his subordinates, he had nothing to fear from an attack. And so, although

the damage could have been repaired at sea, he thought it better for the ships to go to the dockyard.

My brother officers told me that on April 22nd the Battleship Division approached Port Arthur and discharged about a hundred and fifty 30·5-cm. shells at the forts. The land batteries replied without doing any harm.

On the 25th the First Destroyer Flotilla made a detailed reconnaissance along the eastern shores of Kuan-Tung, and got within two kilometres of Dalny.

They wanted to find out whether the Russians had mounted guns all along the coast. For this reason they bombarded the villages along the coast from some way off.

Their fire was only answered from Ta-ten-nan. Rather more to the northward they discovered activity among the soldiers, but not a single gun replied to the fire from our ships.

On April 29th a cruiser division commanded by Admiral Uriu, consisting of six big ships and two destroyer flotillas, the Fourth and the Fifth, convoyed twenty-two large transports to Pitsevo. Each of these transports carried about 3,000 infantry. These 70,000 men composed the Second

Japanese Army, the command of which was entrusted to General Oku.

The disembarkation operations began with a furious cannonade by the destroyers and cruisers.

Then the transports came on, and began to launch boats, which were filled with soldiers, who in the meantime got their weapons ready.

General Matsumura, one of the cleverest men in the Japanese Army, put himself at the head of the expedition and unfurled the banner of the Rising Sun which belonged to the Fourteenth Regiment. Barely fifteen minutes elapsed before the general leaped on shore and planted our country's flag in the square of Pitsevo, while a loud "Banzai!" burst out like a peal of thunder.

A detachment of Russians, seeing that resistance was futile, fired a few shots and retired hurriedly to the interior of the peninsula.

Two hours later General Oku's whole army had disembarked on the Kuan-Tung peninsula.

This disembarkation was to decide the fate of Port Arthur.

On the 4th of May Destroyer Flotilla No. 1 made a preliminary reconnaissance of the coast to the west of the Yalu river, as far as the promontory of Takuchán.

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This is all I know about the naval operations which took place during my stay in hospital.

Yesterday at ten in the morning we started from Nagasaki, our course being SSE.

We were escorting thirty-one large transports, filled to overflowing with troops of all arms.

In the first twenty were the infantry regiments, and in the eleven others the field artillery, two batteries of 12-cm. guns, cavalry, and engineers. The staff of General Nodzu, who was the commander of the Fourth Japanese Army, was on board a cruiser commanded by Captain Oputo. We had to escort the expeditionary troops as far as Takuchán, the point selected for General Nodzu's disembarkation. We spent all yesterday and to-day peacefully steaming along the coast, and searching for this place.

At Sea, May 14th.

We are just finishing the disembarkation. Admiral Uriu, who commands the expedition, is sending me to Port Arthur so as to give Admiral Togo an account of our voyage.

The *Osiva* has got under way, and Takuchán is soon left behind. Thus, coasting along as far

as the Cape of Liautishan, we shape our course for Port Arthur.

At daybreak we saw the outlines of the big cruisers, which keep constantly cruising about before the Russian harbour to prevent the squadron escaping.

I went up to the *Mikasa*, which signalled to me to close, and was received by Admiral Togo.

His appearance has not changed in the least since I saw him towards the end of January. Neither the incidents of the campaign nor his moral victory over the enemy have banished the benevolent smile which seems to be always on his face.

He asked me pleasantly about our expedition, showed satisfaction at hearing that the whole of the Fourth Army had landed without accident, and wanted to know what state the other destroyers were in.

He asked me at the same time whether General Nodzu was pleased with the sailors, and when I answered in the affirmative, remarked that he was delighted, because the general is one of the most estimable and esteemed leaders of the Japanese Army, and a man whose opinion must

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always be respected. He allowed me to have a talk with the officers, who told me that they hoped that very soon fighting would be renewed at Port Arthur, for that the admiral who had succeeded Makharoff was doubtless anxious to have a fight on his own account, whether for the purpose of trying his luck or of seeing whether he could escape from the harbour where he was condemned to inactivity.

As from the moment I stepped on board the *Mikasa* I was under his command, I asked Togo what orders there were for the *Osiva*. He told me to go and join my division, without giving me any message for the Divisional Commander.

Sasebo, May 19th.

Destroyers are without doubt magnificent fighting vessels, but they cannot stand bad weather. After we had started for the coast of Japan the *Osiva's* two boats were washed away, and the heavy sea damaged the funnel to such an extent that we had to repair it. To-morrow I believe we start again.

My orders are to join Admiral Kamimura's squadron, which is going to attack the Vladivostock cruisers.

At Sea, May 20th.

We have now started in search of the Vladivostock ships, which now and again dash out to chase merchant vessels and look for defenceless harbours to bombard.

The division consists of five armoured cruisers, three protected cruisers, and twenty-two destroyers and torpedo-boats.

We cruised about for four days in the Vladivostock waters ; but we did not manage to see even the ghost of one of those phantom cruisers which are so daring when they fight with merchant vessels, yet are unwilling to risk the fury of our ships.

We fired a few shots at the forts as an invitation to Admiral Yessen to come out and give battle. The forts answered, but there was no sign of the Russian cruisers.

On the 23rd we shaped course to the southward and left Vladivostock, as it was inadvisable to have our fleet split up for long.

Our enemies, who have never been remarkable for their foresight and knowledge of the whereabouts of our ships, will keep quiet for some days yet. They are unwilling to venture out of their lair, for they fear a surprise which may cost them dear.

Evidently Admiral Kamimura has had orders, ever since the beginning of the war, not to leave Admiral Togo's squadron for any length of time, for the five armoured cruisers may be wanted at any moment to fight the Port Arthur squadron.

Sasebo, May 25th.

We reached here at 11 a.m., went on shore, and sought out the chief Admiralty official. Commanders of ships gave him an account of their cruise, and we then had a talk with the other officers and asked them for news of the war.

From them and the newspapers we heard that General Kuroki continues to hammer the Russian troops and is advancing rapidly northwards, after occupying Feng-huan-chang.

General Oku also has had a tremendous battle on the isthmus of Kinchou, capturing all the Russian positions at Nanshan, and sixty-two heavy guns. The capture of the isthmus is a mortal blow to the defenders of Port Arthur. For after this the investment was seriously begun, and unless General Kuropatkin succeeds in defeating Marshal Oyama, the fortress must fall sooner or later.

This news filled us with joy, for there is no doubt now that the campaign looks well for us.

Sasebo seems extraordinarily animated. No one would think that we are at war. The liners which ply between here and China come and go as though we were living in the most peaceful times ; some of the ships even, who are engaged in coasting trade with ports in the north, have not stopped running, in spite of the danger of the Vladivostock squadron.

The population is engaged in peaceful occupations. Trade seems to be flourishing, and foreigners are more numerous than before. No one could possibly believe that Kuropatkin is coming, at the head of half a million Cossacks, to dictate terms of peace to us, in accordance with his boast.

Only one thing reminds one that war has broken out—the constant movements of troops. Also now and again bands of little boys can be seen armed with broomsticks and poles marching about and shouting in stentorian tones, “ Heiran, heiran ! ” (“ War, war ! ”)

Captain Nashima, who is on General Oku’s staff and is an intimate friend of my brother the artillery colonel, tells me that in his opinion the war

which his brothers have sent
sea.

Without meaning to boast
do not think that the Russians
own back at sea. Their squandered
by the reverses it has sustained
of Makharoff, besides which
ours.

It must also be remembered
leaders, ever since the outbreak
failed to show the determination
have been expected from them.

Instead of fighting, their object
to preserve their ships from destruction
and when all is said and done
first-class battleships while
They could take the offensive
not. Their tactics do not, however,
the best results. They cannot



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THE "POLTAVA" AND "RETVISAN" FROM THE "PERESVIET."
Underwood & Underwood, London and New York.



PLIGHT OF THE RUSSIANS 141

Sasebo, May 27th.

The *Kincho-Maru* and *Heiden-Maru* arrived to-day with about seven hundred wounded from the First Army. Amongst them were a colonel and five captains.

I had a talk with one of them. He was wounded at Ka-lien-tsé, when the Imperial Guard crossed the Yalu to carry out the turning movement which proved so disastrous for the Russians.

He says that their clothes are bad, their artillery much worse than ours, and that they seem to fight without the slightest enthusiasm, and merely from a sense of duty.

He is sure that before two months have elapsed Oyama will have defeated the Russian commander-in-chief, and that the war will finish with a series of Japanese victories.

At the same time some small guns taken from the *Variag* arrived. The corrosive action of the water has rusted them to such an extent that they are unserviceable.

One of them, which was struck by a large fragment of one of our shells, has had part of its breech blown away.

They are the first trophies of our victories, and a

huge crowd is collecting in the dockyard to see them.

To-morrow the Russian prisoners taken at the Yalu are due to arrive.

Sasebo, May 28th.

The *Asahi-Maru* has brought the prisoners.

They disembarked at midday—about four hundred all told. Only a few especially favoured people have been allowed into the dockyard.

The prisoners are mostly rough and athletic-looking Siberians, and form a great contrast to our little men. They seem to be indifferent, and not very unhappy. They talk and laugh among themselves, and look with the greatest curiosity at our uniforms, guns, and the houses which can be seen in the distance.

The lovely park of Simonoseki, which is next to the dockyard, with its flowerbeds and magnificent vegetation, seems to astound them. Evidently they have never seen anything like it. As I look at them I think of the strange fortunes of war. These men, who were tilling their fields a short time ago, who have no reason to hate us, have been forced to fight against us for their lives, and are now prisoners—perhaps for a long

time—in a country which they do not know, and whose customs are a source of constant wonder to them.

As soon as the bottom has been cleaned, I shall take the *Osiva* to the Elliott Islands, to rejoin the divisions under the command of Admiral Togo.

At Sea, June 2nd.

Two other destroyers, the *Okubo* and the *Yamato*, joined me in the duty of escorting the *Kava-Maru* to the Elliott Islands.

This vessel carried several foreign correspondents on board who were en route to join the staff of the Second Army, so as to follow the operations of war.

At a point twenty miles away from the islands, at three in the morning, a fast despatch boat, the *Kanavara*, stopped us.

An officer boarded the destroyers, and ordered the captain of the merchant vessel to change his course to the south-east so as to prevent those on board from seeing the exact position and numbers of the warships.

We went on at half speed to the anchorage originally intended. To the left we could see the dark and formidable-looking shapes of the

battleships and cruisers. The sea dashed against their iron hulls and the waves burst furiously over them, yet they remained motionless. Two destroyers cruised constantly up and down in front of these floating forts, like sentinels guarding the slumbers of a band of monsters.

All the same, every one on board the big ships was not asleep. Our eyes, used as they were to see great distances in the dark, perceived that the funnels were smoking. Everything was ready for a start at a moment's notice.

It is true that the Russian squadron might have come out of the harbour and slipped away before we could stop them, but the superior speed of our ships would permit of our coming up with the enemy at sea, and giving battle under conditions favourable to ourselves. It must be admitted now that the European newspapers have been very wrong ever since the beginning of the war—in declaring that the Russian squadron in the Far East is as powerful as ours. At first sight it looks as though it might be so, for they have the advantage over us in battleships; but actually we are far stronger, owing to the fact that we possessed six magnificent armoured cruisers before the arrival of the *Nisshin*

and *Kasuga*, whilst they have only got two, the *Bayan* and *Gromoboi*.

Our battleships are superior to theirs in tonnage, weight of guns, and speed, whilst we possess an enormous advantage over them in torpedo-boats and destroyers.

Had this not been so there is no doubt that Makharoff would have tried to bring on an action. He was enterprising and capable enough to do it, but for the very reason that he was so capable, he wanted to reserve his squadron until the Baltic Squadron should arrive and join the Vladivostock cruisers, which, in an evil hour for the Russians, Alexeieff had detached from the main body.

The Italian critics, too, who declared that if Russia had had all its squadrons in the Far East, war would not have broken out, were absolutely wrong. In the first place the ships of the Baltic Squadron could not have sailed for the East for the simplest of reasons : they were not ready.

In the second place, had those ships weighed anchor, war would have broken out all the sooner. We had the most accurate information of what was happening in Russia, and it was quite impossible for us to be caught napping. Our Government knew that sooner or later war was

inevitable, and had made the most complete preparations.

One other thing must be mentioned to explain the tremendous effect produced by our shells. The greater number of the actual shells came from England and Germany, but an important item is manufactured in Japan. This is the burster, which is made in our arsenals; and the Chitose powder is better than any which other nations are using at present. The foreign attachés have been able to convince themselves of this fact during the war.

To sum up, we had a better navy than the Russians at the outbreak of hostilities, and the loss of the *Variag* and the damage done by our destroyers to the *Retvisan* and *Czarevitch* at the very beginning of the struggle, accentuated the inferiority of our adversaries.

I do not know what fate awaits our beautiful vessels, but everything combines to make me believe that if a real action takes place they will gain a glorious victory. When will that fight for which we are all so anxious take place? Probably when, the assaults by land having made the position in Port Arthur untenable, the enemy's squadron tries to cut its way out. The bravery

of our soldiers, and the formidable weapons on which they rely, lead one to suppose that this battle will come off at the end of July, for it is probable that by then the fortress will have ceased to exist.¹

If fortune smiles on us then, we shall be absolute masters of the sea, for I do not think we have much to fear from the Baltic Fleet, even supposing that it succeeds in reaching the Far East.

Dalny, June 5th.

The *Iwate*, the *Idsumo*, the *Kasuga*, two protected cruisers, five destroyers, including mine, and twenty torpedo-boats have the honour of escorting General Nogi to Dalny.

A soldier who fought like a hero in the Chino-Japanese War, where he commanded a brigade in General Oyama's army, Japanese to the backbone, clever, yet modest to a fault, he is going to take command of the forces which will shortly invest the town of Port Arthur.

The general and his staff are on board the *Iwate* ; his chief-of-staff is General Tchigin, from the Corps of Engineers. Twelve large transports,

¹ Like all his countrymen, the author was wrong about this.

which are carrying some 35,000 men and a complete siege train, will discharge their burdens at Dalny at the same time as the general. With the 30,000 men detached from Oku's army and 10,000 more who are due to arrive to-morrow in other transports, General Nogi will have in all an army of 75,000 combatants, all picked men. Most of the officers and sergeants took part in the Chinese campaign and were present at the entry into Port Arthur when it capitulated to Marshal Oyama.

A colonel, to whom I talked when I was at the Elliott Islands, told me that 7,000 veterans were arriving shortly, every one of whom had volunteered so as to assist in the taking of the town.

We reached Dalny at six in the morning. The day is lovely, but the sea rather rough. The disembarkation is rather a difficult matter, for the Russians behaved like Vandals before abandoning Dalny. There is not a single undamaged wharf, and, such as they are, they possibly shelter fixed or floating mines; so we avoid them with the greatest care.

General Kodama is already in the town. He is the Chief of the General Staff, and the real director of all the operations.

I went on shore, when the soldiers had been safely landed, and entered the town of Dalny. Quite half the houses have been reduced to smoking ruins.

The Russians, in the spirit of revenge, have burned the Chinese quarter, which now presents the most miserable appearance. As a fair reprisal, the Chinese have set fire to, sacked, and gutted the European houses. Somewhere or other they found a quantity of dynamite, with which they have committed every kind of atrocity, as though they wanted to wreak on the white stones the vengeance which should have been the lot of the white men.

The house in which General Kodama has installed himself is one of the few which have been preserved almost intact in the general destruction.

The commander of the army of investment had a long talk with General Kodama, then mounted a black horse and went off to the harbour, where the troops had remained. He gave some orders. Unusual bustle was noticeable at once: shrill bugle calls rang out; some regiments started off, and others remained where they were, waiting to be told their destination.

General Matsumura, the youngest general in

OF THE MUSCOVITES.

Those who know him
clever, and brave to a fa

To-night we put to sea
Arthur, for the enemy n
seize the transports whic
morrow laden with troo
by the Russian ships is
Bayan and *Novik* might c
ships by themselves cou
damage.

The weather had got
wind was raising a nas
dangerous for small vessel
I first felt the ship mov.
Osiva. I called to my li
we both watched the boat

stood the seas perfectly, and buried her nose in them without any worse result than a good wetting to those of the crew who were on deck.

Although she certainly dives into the waves, she rises again quickly and buoyantly. Reassured about the stability of my boat, I devoted myself to searching the horizon. The *Osiva* was on scouting duty, and in rear, at a distance of three miles, came the main body of the fleet with destroyers and torpedo-boats on either beam. Two first-class gunboats formed the rear-guard.

When we had gone about twenty-three miles to the south, we altered course slightly to the westward. After proceeding in this direction for about half an hour, we saw a ship which seemed to be Japanese. We made the usual signals, and the ship, which was the *Yadana*, came nearer and told us that everything was quiet in Port Arthur, and that there were no signs that the enemy contemplated a sortie. I communicated what they told me to the captain of the *Iwate*, and the Admiral ordered us to alter course to ESE. In this direction we continued all night, and when daylight dawned we were still steering the same course.

Soon after the sun came out we saw the

were nearly all very old.

If the Russians had possessed the Artillery Department, they could, by the use of the guns 15 miles from Port Arthur, have inflicted a disaster upon us.

Our forces were insufficient to protect the fleet while we could have got to the protection of the fleet. We did not know what the merchant ships were with troops and guns. A couple of 20-cm. shells would have been enough to sink them, if they were not protected. Luckily nothing of the kind happened. The next day we were once again in the water. A great animation prevailed. The fleet had landed the evening before. We were repairing one of the piers, accelerating the landing of the troops, and any of the soldiers falling in

They were leaving their country, many of them were going to their death at a time when their strength and age seemed to promise them a long life, yet they were laughing and singing.

The first men who came off the *Yeden-Maru* collected near a little stone house, now in ruins, which the Russian customs officers must have used, and one of them bringing out a *yesiván*, the instrument used by the *gheishas*, played a tune which was very popular in the Yoshiwara. Many of the soldiers who had arrived the day before drew near to listen to the music, and without any warning the full and pleasing tenor voice of the musician sang :

Madunagta nika Kura
Otovara masiné.

Then came a roar of applause, in which I joined. I was much moved by these reminders of my native land, of that enchanting country where I spent the first years of my existence, where I learned to love and to weep.

I could not help feeling the warmest sympathy for that soldier who had been born in the same country as myself, and who, like me, was risking his life for his fatherland.

The music stopped for a moment, and then, accompanying himself on the instrument, he sang the hymn of the Samurai in a strong and manly voice :

Sutsumé! Sutsumeasotovara :
Sutsumé! Kara kiri namaja!

Then a vast chorus, which must have consisted of more than two thousand voices, took up the refrain, vibrating sonorously over the water.

Suddenly there was a commotion among the crowd, then silence.

General Nogi, smiling, and accompanied by his two sons, was passing through the soldiers. The latter became silent from respect; but the general, going up to the singer, said, "Yes, yes; *sutsumé*, my sons; *sutsumé* for Nippon."

Loud cheers greeted the veteran soldier's words, for he inspired an absolutely blind confidence in his subordinates.

Dalny, June 8th.

The Admiral, who is giving a farewell banquet to Generals Nogi and Kodama, has invited all of us commanders to it. At half-past twelve exactly the National Anthem was played by one of the military bands on the quay.

The two generals were going on board. I never get tired of looking at General Nogi. He must be about fifty-six years of age, but he looks much older.

His hair and beard are grey ; only his eyebrows are black, and under them his eyes, which are small, very dark and very alert, glitter, sometimes with indescribable fire. He is the exact type of a Japanese without a drop of Chinese blood.

His body is short and thin, but muscular and lithe. The expression of his face is always benevolent, and very kindly is the smile which never leaves his lips.

But his prominent brow and clearly defined lower jaw show that he is a man of great determination. He looks impulsive rather than cold, and one realises the activity of his mind when one sees the rapidity with which he glances from side to side, noticing all that goes on around him.

Before sitting down, perhaps because he noticed that I was looking at him so attentively, he took two steps towards me, and said with a smile :

“Are you of our party, or are you going north with Kamimura ?”

stiff and ceremonious.

Gradually the atmosphere
with greater freedom and
explained some technical d
Nogi, who knew hardly a
ships.

The Admiral, when the t
rose and said :

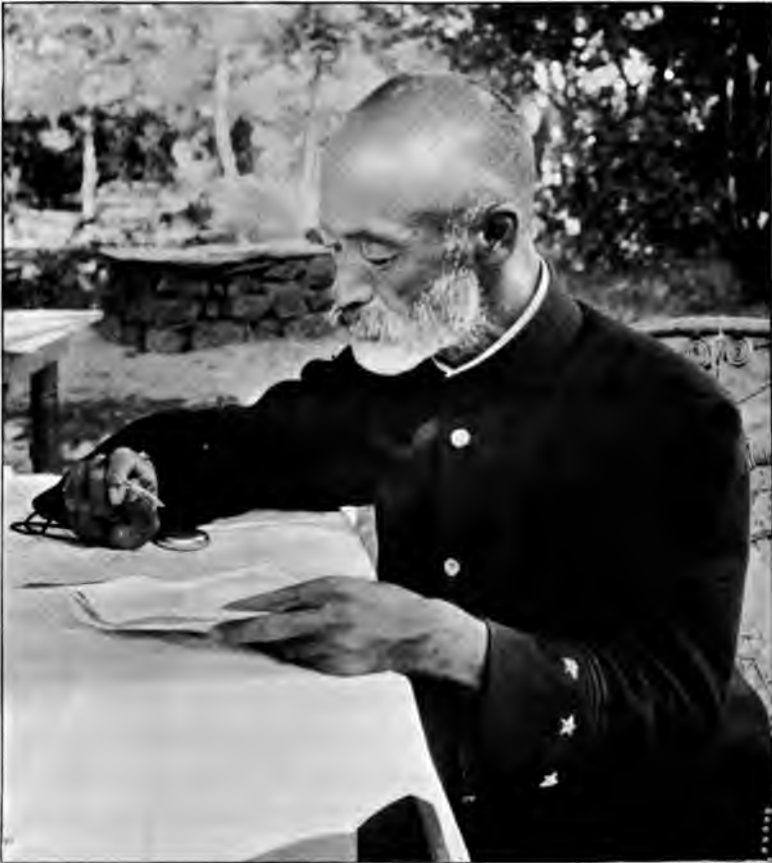
“ I drink to General No
and all those who are taking
enterprise.”

He touched the general's
and the former replied :

“ I drink to the Navy, G
my soldiers.”

General Kodama smiled, a
but said in a low voice to G
side :

“ To the rapid fall of De-



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GENERAL BARON NOGI.



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all laughed but did not applaud, out of respect for our superiors. Will Port Arthur fall as soon as we think ?

At Sea, June 8th.

At six in the afternoon I started off in the *Osiva* towards the harbour of Port Arthur. I am sure to be under the orders of Admiral Togo. I am glad of this, for I shall be able to witness a big sea-fight. The Russian squadron will have to give battle so as to avoid falling either into the hands of Nogi's troops or into ours.

But I must confess that while we are waiting for the day of battle, the duty which we have to do before Port Arthur is very wearisome.

Our orders are to cruise about continuously about six miles from the forts.

This is a standing order, and if no disaster happens to us, it must be due to the fact that the Russians do not want to waste ammunition or to reveal their exact gun-positions.

This is too silly for words, in view of the fact that for more than eight months all the commanders of vessels have been in possession of a detailed plan of all the batteries which can fire on us from the shore



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We know for certain that since the outbreak of hostilities the Russians have not mounted any new guns.

They could if they liked fire on us with impunity, and amuse themselves by chasing us about, secure in the knowledge that we cannot answer them. Another danger for us is the presence of the *Retvisan*, which continues, as ever, to block up the entrance to the harbour like a powerful floating battery.

Her searchlights are always lit. But for this she would have sustained a serious disaster, for we have been given orders to attack her at the slightest sign of relaxation on her part, and see if we cannot once more damage her.

The duty is wearisome, for besides the two fast cruisers which do duty like ourselves, there are only four destroyers to watch an area of thirty-two miles.

This means that every twelve hours we have to go to the cruisers to get coal.

We are on duty a whole week at a time from Saturday to Saturday.

On board each boat we have wireless-telegraphy apparatus to communicate amongst ourselves and with the flagship *Mikasa*.

About midnight the wind, which was blowing from the west, brought us the sounds of a furious cannonade on shore. It lasted about an hour and a half, and from the briskness of it there was evidently an important fight going on between the besiegers and those who will soon be besieged.

This plan of fighting at night is a capital one for troops who are well acquainted with the ground on which they have to fight.

From what I was told by one of the Russian prisoners with whom I had a talk in Sasebo, the attacks which Kuroki's army delivered on the nights of the 29th and 30th of April completely disconcerted the Russians.

The latter, blinded by the light from the searchlights which every company carried, did not know how to defend themselves, nor in what direction to direct their rifle fire. In night attacks the searchlights are placed at a distance of at least 1,000 metres from the troops to which they belong ; and as they are constantly put in different positions, sometimes show to the left and sometimes to the right.

The cannonade stopped long before dawn, but burst out again a few hours later, when the first rays of the sun appeared.

At Sea, June 11th.

Although Admiral Togo declared the blockade of the whole Kuan-Tung peninsula, there is no lack of ships which try to run the blockade.

Last night, at half-past ten, when the *Osiva* had reached the extreme limit of her usual cruise, the officer of the watch awoke me.

A merchant vessel was in sight and was making straight for the harbour, hoping to get in unseen.

I warned my companions by telegraph, and dashed resolutely at her without showing my searchlight. When I got within range I turned on my searchlight and fired a shot by way of warning.

The ship changed her course and seemed to be making for Niu-chang, but a few moments later, increasing her speed, she turned her bows southwards in the direction of Chefu. Had it not been for her first change of course she might have escaped; but the time lost by this proved fatal to her. I started in pursuit at full speed, and in a quarter of an hour, having made certain that I could capture or sink her, fired another blank round. The ship did not stop, so then I

ordered my men to load with shell and open a rapid fire.

The third shot smashed one of her funnels, and then, seeing that I meant business and that I should sink her when I got within torpedo range, she hove to and waited for me. I launched a boat, and my lieutenant, with ten men, took possession of the ship. She proved to be German, the *Blume*, of 3,500 tons. The cargo consisted of corn and forage.

She was coming from Chefu, and could not deny that she was trying to carry provisions to the Russians. After informing the Commander of the Division, and getting his permission, I set off for the Elliott Islands with my prize, well satisfied with my exploit.

On the following day I was received by Admiral Togo. I gave him an account of my capture, with exact details as to cargo, the locality in which the prize was taken, the hour of its capture, and all the other details which are usual in these cases.

The Admiral listened to me kindly, and told me that I and my crew were relieved from duty for that week.

In my presence he gave orders for another destroyer to go out and take up the position before Port Arthur which the *Osiva* had vacated.

I landed on one of the islands where there was a large number of seamen and officers who were off duty, and who were lodging in the houses of the Chinamen, who in these parts are engaged in fishing.

Following the example of my companions, I had a meal in a Chinese inn and started talking with the proprietor, who understood a little Japanese.

He told me that the Russians had committed the most dreadful atrocities in Manchuria, slaying and looting as though in a conquered country.

He added that the Chinese were very glad to see that we had defeated them ; but in spite of his reticence on this point, the worthy being evidently did not rely much on the triumph either of our navy or our army. Our conversation was much as follows :

“ Port Arthur is very strong, and has a large garrison, your honour. Besides, in a short time the Russians will come from the north to relieve it.”

“ Well, let them come,” I answered.

“ Does not your honour know how powerful the white men are ? ”

“ They did not show it at the Yalu ; we took seven hundred prisoners from them there, besides

thirty-two guns and a stand of colours, and they ran like hares."

The innkeeper scratched his head and looked at me in a way which showed that he did not believe a word of what I was saying.

Obviously the Russians have so terrorised the wretched Chinese that the latter think they are invincible, and the mere apparition of an ugly-looking Cossack, threatening every kind of evil, is enough to paralyse a whole Chinese village with terror and make them ready to do anything the man may want.

In the evening I had supper with some brother officers, amongst whom was the captain of the battleship *Fuji*, a veteran of the Chino-Japanese War. We talked of our future naval operations, and the captain said that in his opinion the war was a lost cause for the Russians—anyhow at sea.

Their two best battleships, which we torpedoed during the night of the 8th and 9th of February, are not yet fit for active service, and although we have lost the *Hatsuse*¹ we are far stronger than they. Our torpedo-boats and destroyers would suffice to give us the victory. Even though we

¹ On May 15th the battleship *Hatsuse* ran into a mine and foundered.

tion.

In three or four months we shall have routed the Port Arthur squadron. If it should be necessary, we shall meet the Baltic Squadron on its losses.

"And what do you think the cruisers will do?" I said.

"We have nothing to fear. They may commit a few atrocities in the coast, but as soon as Kaizer comes on them they are lost, as they are in condition to compete with our ships."

We then spoke about the future. We all agreed as to the need for new weapons, and that the *élites* would give us a decisive victory over the Russians.

After this we strolled about the city.

THE VLADIVOSTOCK SHIPS 165

At Sea, June 24th.

Absolute tranquillity has reigned during the last few days. Our brother officers who come from Dalny and the Elliott Islands say that Nogi is going on methodically, driving the Russians from their positions on the Kuan-Tung peninsula. He will continue attacking the troops commanded by Generals Kondratenko and Fock till the moment arrives for the blockade to become a regular siege, and it will not be long before this happens.

To-day we have had bad news. The Vladivostock cruisers, with remarkable daring, shaped their course for the Yellow Sea, eluded the vigilance of Admiral Kamimura, and having sunk a transport laden with troops and heavy guns, fled northwards; thanks to a fog, our cruisers saw no signs of them.

At Sea, July 3rd.

In company with many other warships I have been convoying twenty steamers laden with troops to the Liao-Tung peninsula.

Marshal Oyama, who is going out as commander-in-chief of the four Japanese armies, was in command of them.

The voyage went off without a hitch. The



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Marshal landed at Dalny and put up in General Kodama's house.

Most of the soldiers landed at Pitsevo, and only 12,000 men are left to reinforce General Nogi's troops when it becomes necessary.

The soldiers say that there are loud outcries in Japan against what they call the bungling of Admiral Kamimura, and that every one is demanding his recall.

To us who know the character and intelligence of the young admiral, the disasters that keep on occurring seem most extraordinary. They tell me that he has sailed with his squadron of cruisers for Vladivostock, determined to give battle to the enemy, and to take him by surprise if he ventures out of the harbour again.

At Sea, July 17th.

The weeks go by with hopeless monotony. Decidedly the Russians are not so fear-inspiring a foe as we imagined before war broke out. All the foreign papers declare that the damage on board the battleships and cruisers is now repaired ; but in spite of this we cannot tempt them from their base. Admiral Witheft, who has taken over the supreme command since the death of

Makharoff, does not seem to be of the same temperament as his predecessor, for days and weeks go by without his putting to sea.

These last days we have twice bombarded some Russian positions in Pigeon Bay. At first the enemy's batteries answered ; but the *Kasuga* and *Iwate* advanced fearlessly, and in fifteen minutes succeeded in dismounting most of the guns and silencing the rest.

The *Kasuga* got a 12-cm. shell into one of her turrets, which destroyed it completely, killing three men and wounding five ; she then went to Dalny, where her injuries will be repaired.

As time goes on the situation of the Russian squadron gets more critical, and although it is hard to believe, it is said that they will very soon make a desperate sortie.

They have no hope now of help coming. General Oku has three times routed the Russian army which came to the relief of Port Arthur, it is retiring in confusion to Liao-Yang, after losing many guns and prisoners and more than 9,000 dead and wounded.

The Japanese army has already occupied Niu-chang and Inkeu, and the garrison and squadron of Port Arthur are in dire straits.



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As regards the Baltic Squadron, we hear that it is not yet ready to put to sea. However, it would not be strange if Admiral Witheft made a sortie, if only to meet his end like a brave man : fighting with his back to the wall.

At Sea, July 24th.

At six o'clock this morning eight large ships from our squadron were sighted steaming full speed. They approached to within about twelve miles of the entrance to the harbour, made signals to one of the cruisers on look-out duty, the *Akagi*, to close and receive orders.

The latter took up a position which enabled her to see the interior of the harbour, and then the five big battleships and three cruisers advanced to a point about nine miles from Port Arthur and began a terrific bombardment of the enemy's ships, the fire of course being indirect.

The cruiser signalled the result of each shot. Some of the shells hit the mark. The Russian ships, surprised by this attack, immediately opened fire, and kept under way to render aim more difficult. When each ship had fired fifteen shots, and it was evident that the enemy did not

intend fighting, Admiral Togo retired to the eastward, and soon his huge battleships were lost to view.

Then the *Bayan* and *Novik* came out as far as the entrance to the harbour, and; out of bravado, fired several shots in our direction without touching us.

We retired by the orders of our Commander, to try and entice them out to sea; but they guessed our intentions, and did not venture any further.

At Sea, August 2nd.

A wind has sprung up which revives us. Yesterday one of my gallant seamen died from congestion of the brain produced by the heat. As we could not leave our post of duty he received a sailor's burial, and sank to the bottom of that sea which has devoured so many human lives. He was a man of the north, from Hakodate; and an excellent sailor.

Fortunate being! for he has given his life for his country.

At Sea, August 6th.

This morning General Nogi's army began a

general bombardment of the town. As the firing began our cruisers appeared and joined in the operations as well. The din could be heard from Chefu ; it was absolutely terrific. When four or five heavy guns fired together, the whole peninsula seemed to shake.

The firing lasted five hours ; then the Russian battleships, finding they were none too safe in the harbour, came out to the outer roadstead. What a magnificent opportunity for firing a few torpedoes at them !

But the flagship made no signals, and although we were burning to do so, we did not attack them.

The opportunity seemed to me to be excellent. By sacrificing four or five torpedo-boats we could have put a couple of the enemy's battleships out of action, and thus victory in the end would be assured to us.

With the main body, between the Battleship and Cruiser Divisions, came thirty torpedo-boats and eight destroyers. Admiral Togo evidently did not think this a suitable opportunity for an attack, so at two in the afternoon we left the neighbourhood of Port Arthur for our anchorage in the Elliott Islands.

At Sea, August 11th.

At last we have had our battle. The Russian squadron has been vanquished, just as China was at the battle of the Yalu. Japan is absolute mistress of the sea !

I write these lines while the *Osiva* is running to the southward at full speed in pursuit of the *Novik*.

The battle took place yesterday. Before day dawned our look-out ships noticed unusual activity in the harbour.

The whole of Admiral Witheft's squadron was preparing for sea, either to seek a neutral port or to give battle. When we commanders of vessels heard this, we were delighted, and Admiral Togo was informed.

At half-past five, one after the other, the six Russian battleships steamed out of the harbour, the first being the *Czarevitch*, flying the admiral's flag.

Then followed the *Retvisan*, *Pobieda*, *Sevastopol*, *Peresviet*, and *Poltava*, in the order stated ; and finally the *Bayan*, *Askold*, *Diana*, *Pallada*, and *Novik*. A few torpedo-boats came out last, following five destroyers,

We were drawn up in inverse order ; that is to say, the smaller ships were in front.

We six torpedo divisions formed three arcs of a circle, at a distance of eleven miles from the coast.

Filling the gaps, and five miles further from the coast, were the armoured and protected cruisers.

Three miles still further to the southward—so as to block the enemy's road to Wei-hai-Wei and Chefu, loomed the enormous shapes of the *Mikasa*, *Shikishima*, *Asahi*, *Fuji*, and *Yashima*.

The enemy's squadron got under way at half-past seven in order of battle.

The *Czarevitch*, flanked by the *Retvisan* and *Pobieda*, advanced towards us and fired the first shot at nine minutes past eight.

The battle had begun.

Our cruisers replied, and our torpedo divisions began to manœuvre so as to get between the enemy's big ships. Our battleships came on at half speed, and the *Mikasa* discharged her big guns at the *Czarevitch*, which replied, but without stopping.

Now began a tremendous duel between the guns of the three Russian battleships and our five.

The other three, the *Sevastopol*, *Peresviet*, and *Poltava*, had difficulty in defending themselves from our attacks, and instead of joining their companions, remained a long way off.

The fire from our battleships became more accurate every moment. The *Retvisan* and *Czarevitch* were on fire. At a signal from the Admiral we ran up to the battleships and discharged our first torpedoes at them.

Our armoured and protected cruisers had pushed themselves like a wedge between the Russian divisions, separating them.

Thus the enemy's line of battle was broken. The *Bayan* and *Pallada* withdrew, at about ten o'clock, towards the harbour.

Our battleships drew nearer the Russians, and for fifteen minutes kept up a furious fire with all their larger guns.

Admiral Togo, who saw signs of weakening in the enemy's squadron, despatched three divisions of destroyers (among which was the *Osiva*) to get behind them and prevent the Russian ships retiring to the harbour.

Suddenly an important change in formation took place in the enemy's squadron. The ships exchanged signals amongst themselves, and while

the *Czarevitch*, *Askold*, *Diana*, and *Novik* continued to advance in different directions, the torpedo-boats and destroyers withdrew towards Port Arthur. On their way they attacked our three destroyer divisions, so as to leave a clear passage for the five battleships, which, tired of fighting, were returning towards the harbour hotly pursued by the *Iwate*, *Yakumo*, *Azuma*, *Asama*, and six of the protected cruisers.

One of these, the *Hiroya*, showed such daring that she got close enough to the *Retvisan* to discharge her small guns, killing many of the crew.

The latter, however, fired the large guns which she carried aft, and a 32-cm. shell tore up the deck of the *Hiroya* near the bows, and started a big fire on board.

I took advantage of this mêlée to approach unseen, under cover of the *Hiroya*, and attacked the *Retvisan*.

My first torpedo missed the mark. The second struck fairly on the keel of the monster, which quivered and shook in her tracks. I thought I had dealt her a mortal blow, but it was not so; the double bottom had saved her, and she continued her journey towards the harbour, though more slowly than before.

To get away from the *Retvisan's* guns, which had killed three men on board my boat and wounded eight, I steamed off in an easterly direction. Suddenly, to my astonishment, I saw another Russian battleship, which was steaming towards the harbour and approaching me. It was the *Peresviet*. The *Kasuto* and *Osiva* dashed towards her and fired three torpedoes. Two of these hit their mark, and we were about to put an end to her when a hail of shells falling round our boats warned us that we were under fire from the Russian batteries on Golden Hill.

We received the signal to retire. The battle had proved a complete victory for us, and the Russians, routed and battered, were returning to their doomed harbour without any hope of ever quitting it again.

From the bridge of the *Osiva* I watched the *Retvisan* and *Peresviet* entering the harbour, both damaged by our torpedoes.

The crews of all our vessels burst into enthusiastic cheers when they saw the last of the enemy's ships disappearing behind Golden Hill.

It was evident, to us who had watched the retirement, that three of the enemy's largest ships and two or three smaller ones had been unable



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to follow the rest and were in a very critical position. Although we scanned the horizon, we could not see the slightest trace of either the main body of our squadron or of the enemy's ships, and not even distant firing could be heard.

Had the enemy's ships been sunk, or had they succeeded in eluding our pursuit and taken refuge in some neutral harbour? At four o'clock in the afternoon I got orders to go at full speed to Sasebo.

Ten other torpedo-boats and all the destroyers came with me.

The Commander of our division said that at Sasebo we should get orders.

Probably we are going to guard the straits, for possibly the Vladivostock squadron may have co-operated with the Port Arthur squadron to try and re-unite. The weather is lovely though the sea is somewhat rough, which makes me sorry for my poor wounded men, twelve in number, who will get no rest till they reach the hospital at Sasebo.

If on board all the ships of our squadron the results of the battle are as serious as on board mine, the number of dead and wounded must be very great.

REJOICINGS

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I have lost nearly one-third of my crew, and the *Osiva* has been struck in the bows by a shell which has damaged her port torpedo-tube.

In half an hour we shall reach Sasebo, when I shall land my wounded and bury my three dead men.

At Sea, August 13th.

At Sasebo I heard that the *Czarevitch* and *Askold* have run into the German harbour of Kiau-chau, and the *Diana* into Saigon. Meanwhile the *Novik* escaped northwards, to join the Vladivostock ships.

The first three will have to be disarmed in accordance with the laws of neutrality, and are lost to Russia till the end of the war.

Two of our small cruisers, which are as fast as she, are pursuing the *Novik*, and will not let her escape unless she succeeds in joining the Vladivostock ships.

In Sasebo there are great illuminations in the streets, and great rejoicings over our victory. At dusk we left harbour and, as I had anticipated, proceeded to watch the straits, with standing orders to dispute the passage of Admiral Yessen's cruisers, even though we should lose all our boats.



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Admiral Kamimura has started off to look for these ships, and presumably if he finds them he will compel them to fight.

I have now repaired the damage to my torpedo-tube, and my boat is again ready to fight.

We cruised about all night in the straits without seeing even the ghost of the Russian squadron, and continued peacefully cruising in the same place all the morning.

At mid-day the despatch boat *Hiroda* came up with orders from Admiral Togo for us to return to the Elliott Islands and rejoin the main body.

At Sea, August 20th.

The day before yesterday we heard that Admiral Kamimura's squadron has gained a decisive victory over the Vladivostock cruisers, which are now reduced to complete impotence.

The *Rurik* has been sunk; the *Gromoboi* and *Rossia* have been so damaged, and have lost so many of their crew, that they will be unable to put to sea for at least three months. That phantom squadron which has committed so many atrocities on defenceless ships has been unable to withstand the first serious blow from our armoured cruisers. The poor *Novik* has also

been sunk, near Korsakova. Her captain, who was one of the cleverest and bravest men in the Russian Navy, deserved a better fate.

All the same his ship met with a heroic end ; she fought till the last moment, and then sank. The two blows which the Russian Navy has received within the space of five days have left it practically helpless.

On the other hand, we have only sustained losses of slight importance—the *Hatsuse*, *Yoshino*, and three destroyers.

The Russians have lost two big battleships, one armoured cruiser, three protected cruisers, two destroyers, the *Novik*, and two gunboats, besides seven torpedo-boats put out of action.

Our general opinion is that Port Arthur will surrender in a couple of months, for Nogi has already begun assaulting the advanced works ; and as the place has no hopes of reinforcements, presumably it will not offer much resistance.

We are absolute masters of the sea ; we hold in our grasp that " sea power " which, according to the English, is a definite proof of our victory. The Port Arthur squadron must surrender or perish in a sortie.

To us the behaviour of the Russian sailors seems

most extraordinary. They seem to be far more anxious to preserve their ships from harm than to fight.

In none of our encounters has there been one act of daring on their part.

Why did they not, with their five battleships and four cruisers, fight a duel to the death with our larger vessels, to avenge the loss of Admiral Witheft ? ¹

Had they done this it might have cost them the loss of one of their fighting units ; but, fighting in desperation, they would have done us serious damage.

Is it true, as the English maintain, that there is not a single good sailor in Russia ?

Some of our officers, chiefly the younger ones, also think it strange that Admiral Togo did not turn the last battle to better account, for he might have captured some of the enemy's ships.

Quite true ; but to effect this he would have to risk losing some of his battleships or cruisers, and this would not have suited him at all.

Japan has no reserve squadron, and must preserve the one which she possesses intact, in the

¹ Killed by explosion of shell in conning-tower of *Czarevitch* during action of 10th August.

event of the Russians trying, with their Baltic Squadron, to avenge the misfortunes sustained in the Yellow Sea. With the destroyers and torpedo-boats our commander has sufficient forces to deal with the battleships and cruisers which the Russians have left, and there is no necessity to expose the larger and more costly fighting units to danger.

At Sea, August 27th.

As the siege of Port Arthur by land becomes more vigorous, the attempts to run the blockade which we have established by sea become more frequent.

Though the Russians say that they "have provisions enough for a year," the fact remains that every day we capture Chinese junks trying to bring provisions into the town.

Altogether seventeen vessels are patrolling near the harbour.

We are disposed in such a way, out of effective range of the land batteries, that it is very difficult for any ship to elude our vigilance at night. By day it is absolutely impossible.

Yesterday there was a heavy bombardment on land. Judging by the way the reports followed

each other, at least two hundred guns were taking part in the cannonade.

They say that one of these days a general assault on the town will take place.

To-morrow, when my tour of patrolling finishes, I shall go to the Elliott Islands and get news of the war.

As regards the Baltic Squadron, we now hear that it has been decided not to despatch it for the present, as all the battleships are still in a very backward condition.

At Sea, September 10th.

Once more I am on duty before Port Arthur. The general assault has cost us many lives, and not produced much of a result.

They say that more than fifteen thousand Japanese have been killed or wounded. But if as yet we have not triumphed at Port Arthur, we have at any rate won a great victory in Manchuria. The entrenched camp of Liao-Yang, which, according to the Russians, was impregnable, has fallen into the hands of our troops after a week's fighting.

The losses on both sides were enormous. But the Japanese Army has demonstrated its superiority over the Russians, and shown that it can

fight as well on a plain as in a mountainous country.

If Kuroki had had fifty thousand men more, he would have captured several large bodies of the enemy.

At Sea, September 13th.

This morning two battleships and six big cruisers arrived. For five hours they bombarded some batteries and trenches which the Russians have constructed to the east of Liautishan, which is in the western section of the Port Arthur defences.

As the *Osiva* is patrolling in that neighbourhood, I was able to see that the defences became untenable, and that General Nogi's troops were establishing themselves on the shore, thus cutting off the Russians' last chance of communication by land.

The enemy's ships show no signs of life. Now and again one of the battleships comes out into the outer roadstead, wastes some ammunition, and then returns to the harbour once more.

The Japanese batteries continually bombard the whole place. In the daytime they fire at the forts ; nearly every night they bombard the

town, causing many fires. Yesterday a store of Russian ammunition blew up ; it made a terrific explosion.

Those of our ships which bombarded the coast are now, as I write these lines, firing on the town. Their fire is indirect, but is evidently effective, for the Russian battleships have got under way. Only the *Peresviet* lies motionless, listed to port, probably repairing the damage inflicted by my torpedo.

Dalny, September 17th.

We have returned to Dalny, escorting a force which started from Nagasaki the day before yesterday.

It was composed of 17,000 soldiers and 100 mortars of a new pattern, 11 inches in diameter. They are enormously powerful pieces. In a short time they will be in position on Wolf Hill, and then the town will be in a far worse plight than before.

Every one thinks that the forts will be unable to withstand the shells thrown by these monsters ; but as they weigh 110 tons each, their transport and erection will take a long time—at least a month.



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JAPANESE HEAVY GUN AMMUNITION.

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Since I was in Dalny last, the city has changed in appearance. All traces of the vandal-like destruction committed by the Russians and Chinamen are gradually disappearing.

Many shopkeepers have come from Japan and set up here, and as the sea is now absolutely safe, there is a large amount of traffic between this port and Japan.

The articles of comfort and luxury which were wanting at the beginning of the campaign are now abundant both here and in Niu-chang. Trade with China is now more flourishing than before the outbreak of war, and large numbers of Chinese have come here with their families in the certainty that our Army will come off victorious.

The Commander of the Division has given me good news. In a couple of weeks I shall be promoted to the rank of commander, and given command of a third-class cruiser.

At Sea, September 20th.

This morning, before sunrise, a furious bombardment of Port Arthur from all four points of the compass awoke me. I at once went on to the bridge, and saw that the large battleships and cruiser division, at a distance of eight miles

dominate the line of Russian
all its guns against the tow

It was the most gorgeous
witnessed in my life.

Dense clouds of smoke rose
of each gun, and as I looked
through my glasses, I could
thicker smoke which now
terrible conflagrations.

After an hour and a half
which filled one's imagination
of this world during the
heard the deafening roar of
A huge sheet of flame broke
black bank of smoke marked
catastrophe.

I asked one of my comrades
and with the plan of the to
out that one of the pow

most of the time more than thirty heavy projectiles a minute were falling into the besieged city.

All her forts kept firing their heavy guns, which made a quite distinct sound from the detonations of the Japanese artillery.

All our ships are continually under way, steaming at half speed, manœuvring, now turning their stern and now their bows towards the harbour, so as to fire their heavy guns alternately.

We destroyers cannot take part in this fiendish symphony because of the short range of our guns, but we also keep continually moving to avoid being struck by any of the enemy's shells.

We are all struck by the fact that the Russian battleships have not gone out to the outer roadstead to take part in the fray. However, it looks as though Admiral Togo had foreseen this, as we destroyers have been given no orders respecting the Russian battleships. We are all longing for them to come out; for then we can attack them in our turn, and be participators in a fight of which up to the present we have been merely spectators. As I have said before, the Russian projectiles hardly ever reach us, but a little before one o'clock in the afternoon an enormous shell, which must

have been at least 28 centimetres in diameter, fell about two hundred metres from my boat and sank into the sea with an ugly hiss.

A few metres more and the *Osiva*, my crew and myself, would have ceased to belong to the Japanese Navy.

The noise is really awful. We are all half stupefied; and the air vibrates in the most extraordinary way.

The atmospheric commotion produced by the artillery fire is so great that at a quarter past two an absolute hurricane arose, accompanied by a fall of rain such as one only expects to see in the tropics.

At three in the afternoon punctually the fire of the ships suddenly stops, and they retire out to sea in two large divisions, one composed of battle-ships and the other of cruisers. But the bombardment by land goes on uninterruptedly, and with implacable determination, as though the besiegers were imbued with the desire to demolish once and for all the immovable blocks of granite cut out of the living rock which form the walls of the forts.

There can be no doubt that a serious attack on the besieged town is in course of preparation,

and we all entertain hopes that our army will gain a decisive victory, strong though the defences of Port Arthur may be.

Night draws on, yet the firing continues. At nine o'clock, when it is completely dark, the Japanese ships once more draw near and open fire, whilst the land forts, from Liautishan to Golden Hill, answer them.

It is now evident that the troops are getting ready for an assault, and Admiral Togo wants to prevent the gunners in the forts which face the sea from helping their companions who are struggling with the Japanese infantry.

The sight is twice as magnificent now as it was by day. Enormous searchlights flash in the darkness, momentarily illuminating the black masses of the ships and forts, while the heavy guns belch out sheets of flame several yards in length, which die away with startling suddenness.

Meanwhile the searchlights dart their beams of light in all directions, powerful and blinding ; they cross and clash in space with the most marvellous effect, or fall on to the sea like flaming swords which mow down all opposition.

With good field-glasses we can see the effect produced by the fire of our soldiers on land.

There also the brilliant lights are flashing, and searching the uttermost parts of the hills. They climb to the summits, dive into the torrents, descend into the valleys, and from my position, which is to the extreme west of the peninsula, I can see their white radiance illuminating dense masses of men who are hurling themselves forward in the assault of the defences.

Suddenly the fire of the ships and the land batteries ceases. Complete silence reigns, broken now and again by a few shots from the enemy.

We go a little nearer the shore, and while I am manœuvring to get to a convenient distance for seeing, without being in the way, we hear a deafening uproar familiar to all Japanese ears—It is the “Banzai!” of the attack. The rattle of musketry sounds fiercely and continuously, whilst other noises die down. Then come the shouts of our soldiers, “Sutsumé! sutsumé!” (“Forward!”) as they dash on to death or victory.

The searchlights intensify that scene of awful slaughter. Our soldiers are climbing the slopes of five hills, crowned with a triple line of flaming light, which flares ceaselessly, darting about, quivering, increasing in intensity, and waning,

We can see the lines of Russian trenches, from which the enemy are firing on our men.

At times we hear a distinct noise which dominates the sound of musketry: it is the voice of the machine-guns, as they mow down whole companies who fall never to rise again.

Ten, eleven, twelve o'clock strikes; yet the slaughter continues.

Now and again we hear a distant clamour which seems to show that the Russians or Japanese have taken some position or have gained a partial victory over their enemies.

At one in the morning, approximately, we hear a tremendous uproar, and by the light of the thousands of guns which are firing we see, fluttering on a little hill which faces the fort of Sun-ti-chau, the banner of the Rising Sun.

My crew and I give vent to a resounding "Banzai!" which only the night and the fishes can hear. Once again the Japanese have conquered.

That hill was crowned, like the others, with a triple tier of trenches defended by Russian soldiers. These have met their death, and my brothers, victorious, spurn their bodies under foot.

The battle goes on till half-past two. Then

suddenly all the searchlights die out, all the rifles are silent. A moment later large beacon-fires illumine all the Japanese positions, and a terrible roar rends the air.

All the guns once more open on the Russians for ten minutes.

Then once again a deep silence reigns. The fight is finished—to-morrow we shall know who has won.

At Sea, September 26th.

As I write these lines the *Osiva* is convoying a fresh force of soldiers, who are going to Dalny from the Elliott Islands.

I heard afterwards that the attack on the 20th was indecisive.

The Japanese lost heavily, and only captured the two redoubts on the hill where I saw our banner waving.

We know that the besiegers did all in their power, and made superhuman efforts not to be beaten in their first assault.

Now we are landing twelve thousand soldiers more, who come from the North of Japan, from the division in the island of Formosa. The force includes nine heavy pieces of artillery, which



THE BALTIC SQUADRON 193

will increase the havoc wrought by the recent bombardment.

Dalny has already resumed its normal appearance, except that instead of Russians, Germans, and Siberians pervading the streets and occupying the houses, Chinese and Japanese are *en évidence* everywhere. So sure is every one of our ultimate victory that even women and children abound.

The wharves have been repaired, all the mines, floating and fixed, removed, and ships can enter and leave the harbour with impunity.

To-morrow, when we have taken a fresh supply of ammunition on board, we—that is the Torpedo Flotilla and squadron of protected cruisers—shall sail once again for the waters of Port Arthur.

At Sea, October 5th.

We have heard that a great battle will soon take place in Manchuria, and we hope that if the result is favourable to our arms, Port Arthur will shortly have to surrender. It is said, too, that the Baltic Squadron is on the point of sailing from Cronstadt to come to the assistance of the ships which are imprisoned in the Muscovite stronghold.

Though our strength and powers of endurance are sufficient to fight the two squadrons combined, yet I think that it would be a great advantage to us to be completely quit of the battleships which are in Port Arthur before the Baltic vessels reach the Yellow Sea.

One of these days another general assault on the defences will be delivered, and probably the Navy will take its share in this with a vigorous bombardment.

* * * * *

As I write these lines the uproar and turmoil of a fight which we had a few hours ago are just dying away.

Thinking doubtless to take advantage of the absence of the larger vessels of our squadron, the *Pallada* came out to the outer roadstead and opened fire on our protected cruisers.

At the same time, two sea-going torpedo-boats, proceeding at full speed, tried to break through our lines, no doubt with the intention of going to Chefu.

The *Kioto*, *Osiva*, and the cruiser *Akagi* disputed their passage, and brought them to action.

By means of a dexterous manœuvre they succeeded in passing between the cruiser and

our two destroyers, but then we, getting every ounce out of our engines, riddled them with projectiles for two hours and a half. The big guns of the *Akagi* had a most destructive effect on the Russian vessels. The latter gradually ceased firing, and the *Batrackzi*, one of the best and newest torpedo-boats in the Russian Navy, blew up without it being possible to save any of her crew. The other torpedo-boat, recognising the impossibility of continuing the struggle, altered her course. We ran alongside as she stopped momentarily, having been struck by two shells from the *Osiva*.

We approached to capture her, but she fired the two small guns which she carried aft, and started off again, hoping to gain some haven of refuge.

Our other torpedo-boats, however, which had been watching the incidents of the fight from afar, came up now, and the poor *Borinsky* had to haul down her flag. Of the sixty-two men who had composed her crew when she started from Port Arthur, only twenty-eight remained alive. The captain and his lieutenant were dead. I am to have the honour of taking this new prize to the Elliott Islands, and of handing her over to Admiral Togo.

On board the Katsumo

I am now commanding a cruiser, the newest in the Japanese Navy. The *Katsumo*, was launched in Japan, displacement of 2,400 tons, and eight 6-cm. guns, one torpedo machine-guns. The day before we got to the Elliott Islands, Admiral Meade met me most cordially and congratulated me on my behavior. On the 4th of the month. Then he gave me the brevet of a commander. He said to me formally, "In the name of the Emperor I give you command of the cruiser."

"Continue to do your duty up till now, and remember always the honor of the nation, and the conscientious orders given by your superior."

was for an opportunity of dying for her or of taking part in a decisive victory over the Russians. My comrades congratulated me. I handed over command of the *Osiva* to an officer who was pointed out to me, and hastened to take possession of my splendid new vessel. In her I sailed this afternoon for the waters of Port Arthur, where I shall shortly arrive. In spite of what my superior officers say, I have but slender hopes of a fight in the immediate future, for the Russian squadron seems determined to let itself be captured in its lair, instead of perishing in mortal combat.

It is, however, true that if they were to attempt a sortie now, their ships would probably all perish before they could reach a neutral port.

A few days ago eleven new destroyers from the dockyards of Simonoseki and Osaka arrived to join the Japanese squadron.

These destroyers, with those which are now on duty, are more than enough to destroy the battle-ships and the few cruisers which the Russians possess.

Their one hope now is that the Baltic Squadron may arrive before the surrender of the forts, and then to make a desperate sortie, at the same moment that the new fleet is engaging us.

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But all this is still a long way off, especially as the enemy's ships are not at the moment on their way to the Far East.

At Sea, October 12th.

Yesterday I captured a German steamer, the *Rundschau*, which was making for Port Arthur with a cargo of corn and food-stuffs. At 11 p.m. I thought I heard a suspicious noise to port, which sounded like a ship some distance off, going along at full speed.

I tried in vain to penetrate the darkness, but could see nothing. Not a spark came from the funnel of that invisible ship, but I ordered my furnaces to be looked to and turned my bows in a direction where, guided by the noise, I thought I should hit off the line of the ship.

For a long time I searched the sea all round me with the aid of my magnificent searchlights.

After firing a gun to warn the other ships on guard, I went on towards Port Arthur, at the risk of being fired on by the forts. Suddenly my torpedo lieutenant called out to me that he thought he could see a ship on the starboard hand and about two miles north of us. I ordered the foremost guns to be loaded with

THE ADMIRAL'S GOODWILL 199

shell, and fired another blank charge as a signal for the steamer to heave to. Two minutes later, as she did not obey, I fired with shell. The fifth shot struck her, and the ship hove to. I sent an officer and fifteen men in a cutter to board her, altered my course, and steamed away at full speed with my prize from the danger zone in which I found myself, for the forts were working their searchlights and I ran the risk of getting a shell on board the *Katzumo*. I reported myself to the commander of my division and awaited orders, which were, as I had expected, to take the steamer to the Elliott Islands.

This second capture, coming so soon after I had assumed command of my new ship, gave me great importance in my own eyes, and I was sure of earning the goodwill of the Admiral.

The latter smiled when he saw me, and congratulated me cordially on my new prize, saying that if all the sailors of Japan were as lucky as I, there would soon be no room in her harbours for the quantity of Russian prizes.

He made me return to my post at once, and said that we should soon find ourselves in the harbour of Port Arthur, as a fresh general assault on the defences was contemplated.

At Sea, October 22nd.

At ten o'clock this morning the whole of the Japanese squadron assembled before Port Arthur and began a general bombardment of the town and forts. The batteries of Nogi's army are also firing, as they did on that famous day in September

The Russians answer with less vigour than on that occasion, and the bombardment lasts without a pause till one o'clock in the afternoon. An officer on board one of the destroyers which come from the Elliott Islands tells me that we have won a great victory in Manchuria, the Russian casualties being over forty thousand.

It is to be hoped that in the assault, which they intend making this afternoon or evening, Nogi's soldiers will be as fortunate as those of Oku and Nodzu. A squadron of destroyers and three cruisers, among which is the *Katzumo*, have been bombarding some batteries which the Russians have established on the lower slopes of Liautishan, and which have been troubling the attacking force.

Our guns enfilade these batteries, and have done great damage to them, but one battery of

the principal fort opened fire on us, and we had to withdraw to avoid the risk of a catastrophe.

We succeeded in our object without losing a man or being damaged in the least, and are delighted with ourselves.

The bombardment lasted till four o'clock without a pause. Now and again the guns give a sharp report, as though they were splitting, or bursting into a thousand pieces.

This is caused by using too heavy charges, which has a deleterious effect on the guns. But the impression of these discordant notes only lasts a moment, and soon the hellish concert, which deafens all who hear it, begins again.

At seven o'clock in the evening a thick fog arose, which shows that there have been floods of rain in Manchuria.

When that impenetrable curtain got too thick, the Japanese batteries suddenly became silent, and only the Russians continued firing, but as they did not know exactly where to aim, they also eventually ceased firing. The assault is about to be delivered, or has already begun.

Our large battleships do not stir from their look-out positions. Possibly when our soldiers have occupied some of the forts, the Russian

ships may try their luck and make an effort to escape in the fog. They may try, but they will not do it without a fight.

All the destroyers excepting the 4th and 5th Divisions, which are patrolling in rear of the fleet, keep cruising round the outer roadstead; and so small is the interval between the ships that any vessel which tries to pass through them will be discovered instantly.

We protected cruisers are on the look out as well, patrolling the space between the destroyers and battleships at half speed. And as the latter and the large cruisers form a huge animated semi-circle in addition, which moves incessantly up and down, the Russian squadron will have to pass through three lines which are watching and hemming it in.

Fifteen minutes after the cessation of the artillery fire, the land breeze brought us the sounds of a battle which was taking place round Port Arthur: a faint, distant noise, mingled now and again with confused shouts.

The rattle of musketry and of the machine-guns sounded like a train in motion when the brakes are applied on a slope. The shouts of the soldiers made me think of the fragments of

applause which come from a crowded theatre, penetrating far into the stillness of the night.

The fight lasted till one in the morning, then suddenly stopped. The men, weary of dealing death, were resting. Which side had been beaten ?

Six or seven dull detonations come to our ears from Port Arthur. As the wind has freshened, and is blowing from the south, we cannot gauge the extent of these explosions. My lieutenant, who is very keen and much given to exaggerating, tells me that he is certain that our soldiers have captured the outer line of forts and that the Russians have blown up their ships, not wishing to have to hand them over when the place surrenders.

I point out that there is a far simpler means of destroying the Russian battleships and cruisers : namely, to send them out to us and engage in a desperate fight, in which, though they may possibly not come off victorious, they may do us infinite harm.

I cannot pull him off his hobby-horse. He declares that the Russian sailors will not die fighting, and that they will do no more than destroy their ships. This ought to please us.

they are going to them
which suffered great loss
attack the other night.

All the same, our sole
doubts which form part
the forts of Ehrlung and

It seems a very small
blood which was shed
reality it enables us to see
forts.

Port Arthur begins
situation.

This morning my old
conjunction with the
Chinese ships laden with
going to Port Arthur from
us unnoticed in the fog

themselves with a vengeance, but decidedly fortune does not favour them.

The value of the captured goods amounts to more than 200,000 roubles, at current rates. But they must have cost the Russians more than a million, owing to the liberal rewards they have to give to the Chinese sailors for running the risk of so dangerous an undertaking.

Though the Admiral would be quite within his rights if he punished the crews of these blockade-running ships, he never does it. He contents himself with confiscating ship and cargo and leaving the sailors at liberty. This is a judicious proceeding. If he hanged the Chinamen, they would offer more resistance than they do now before allowing themselves to be captured. As it is, they profit by these temperate measures, and, unwilling to risk their lives if discovered, surrender on the first summons.

At Sea, November 8th.

Snow, fog, and gales of wind are our daily portion. We are beginning to feel the cold, especially on night duty.

The Admiral impressed on us yesterday the necessity for the most strenuous vigilance, for it

is that the crew do their
a pity that I cannot ha
want, though according
not have to wait long.

The Baltic Squadron is
fight and see whether i
the five Russian battleshi

All the same, I think th
waters of the Yellow Sea
have to rely solely on its c
command of the sea.

They tell me that to-m
bombard the defences with
of which I spoke a few day
seen the performances of
ranges say that no fortres
stand their projectiles. V

A

powerful than those of naval guns, and where their shells fall the damage is awful.

It looks as though there had been a volcanic eruption, judging by the havoc.

Yesterday a Russian destroyer came out of the besieged harbour.

She took advantage of the first hours of darkness, and passed between two of our destroyers in the first line, without taking the precaution of hiding her fires.

My cruiser and two others went to meet her ; but she did not stop for an instant nor change her course in the slightest, and in spite of being struck by some of our projectiles, would not pause to reply, but continued on her course towards Chefu like a rocket.

We pursued, but she rapidly gained on us. Her funnels belched live flame, as though they were burning oil to increase the combustion. Such was her speed that we thought her boilers would blow up. However, nothing of the kind happened, and the boat reached Chefu safe and sound. Her commander has done his duty like a man.

At Sea, November 29th.

The squadron remains invisible. There is no

defences are on the point of
that the ships will come out
the *Petrovsk* and so many
us pay dearly for our victory

Three days ago a desperate
besieging troops and the battle
not a question of a general
at all costs a hill which dominates
interior and exterior roads
a hill which has on its summit
midable forts which crown the

If Nogi succeeds in capturing
may be considered ours.

Besides the damage that
other forts from here, the
destroyed with impunity,
alternative but to allow it
or give battle to us.

The assault has been going

When the attack of our battalions began, the whole hill, which they call "203-Metre Hill," was lit up, and glittered.

The searchlights threw their brilliant beams on to the assaulting columns. Thousands of rifle and machine-gun bullets, hand grenades, etc., anything, in fact, which could stop the assailants and thin their ranks, rent the air.

But our men never faltered, and, overcoming all obstacles, despising all dangers, they took trench after trench, and reached the summit without stopping to count their dead, without attending to those who fell wounded. Only with daylight every morning did the slaughter stop.

At Sea, December 5th.

We are approaching the *dénoûment*. 203-Metre Hill fell into the hands of the Japanese the day before yesterday at two in the morning.

A tremendous uproar announced the capture of the hill, and by the light of the rockets which for a few seconds lit up the town, the forts, the roadstead, and the open sea, we could see the banner of the Rising Sun waving on the heights which have cost us so much blood.

At half-past three the Russians made a furious

Port Arthur is vanquished
When the 11-inch shells be
forts, the town, and the bat
all be destroyed. Surely the
approaches. The whole squa
the Elliott Islands, and is
Togo does not want one singl
general destruction.

At S

The Russian squadron has
The magnificent battleships
Russia to terrorise Japan no
are useless hulks, and the s
no longer float. Ten or twe
their decks and completed th
The *Retvisan* lies with her
though imploring supreme :
to which her ram is pointing

only her superstructure stands out from the sea.

The *Pobieda*, who has not done credit to her name of victory, is listed to starboard, and exposes enormous holes in one side and in the bows.

The *Poltava* has disappeared

The *Sevastopol* is the only one which made any attempt at defence.

She came out to the exterior roadstead, and, to shelter herself from Nogi's terrible projectiles, got as near as she could to Golden Hill.

But she reckoned without our torpedo-boats. When once night had fallen, five torpedo-boats and two destroyers, ignoring the fire of the coast batteries, attacked her.

She defended herself well, but was struck under the keel by two torpedoes, which prevented her moving.

If there were a greater depth of water in that spot, the *Sevastopol* would now be totally submerged ; as it is she is balanced on some rocks which support her, though they are tearing her keel off. Anyhow, she is as useless as the rest of her comrades.

Now the Baltic Squadron can come when it likes, for we are prepared for the fray.

At Sea, December 17th.

One might think that after the enemy's squadron had been destroyed, or reduced to such terrible straits, our fleet would have finished its task. Unfortunately this is not so. I say unfortunately, for now we have no enemies to fight and our duties become most wearisome. Nevertheless they are of great importance ; the entrance to the harbour must be watched, if possible, with greater care than before. It would not do for the besieged to be supplied with ammunition or victuals, which would tend to prolong a resistance that has already lasted too long.

The commander of my division was telling me no later than yesterday, before I went on duty with my ship, that the Chinese junks are become more enterprising than ever, in the belief that we have relaxed our vigilance since the squadron which has served under so many admirals has sunk into the depths of the sea. Of all the Russian admirals not one gave the squadron the chance of a good fight nor took the ships out of the prison to which we consigned them at the outbreak of hostilities;

My chief's words did not pass unheeded, for scarcely two hours ago—at this moment it is 8 p.m.—I had to fire on two ships, which, hugging the cliffs of the coast, were trying to enter Port Arthur. The fog which has prevailed since dusk saved them from certain capture.

As they were so close to the shore I was unable to get near them for fear of the rocks, and in a short time they were lost in the dense curtain of fog which enfolds us.

For some days now intense cold has prevailed. The wind which blows from shore is icy. My crew have had to don their sheepskin coats and the fur caps which cover their heads and necks and protect their ears.

We officers wear coats which were issued to us at the beginning of the campaign. They have silk linings, are stuffed with eider-down, and are much lighter than those worn by the men, though they protect us equally well. Our gloves are of doeskin, lined with wool, and reach half-way up our arms. By these means we avoid direct contact with the metal-work, which inflicts a sensation as painful as a burn if touched with the bare hand.

The Russians must be very short of ammunition,

One cannot help thinking, of ammunition, that the defence would hold out many days more.

They say that General Kosenko, a week ago in one of the advances, was, as I heard from one of his aides-de-camp some time ago, a man of Port Arthur, an intelligent man, in whom his soldiers had confidence, and who always procured brain devices for prolonging reinforcing threatened points, those whose spirit flagged.

The loss of General Kosenko is more felt by the Russians than the loss of their commander-in-chief would be.

I hear that no general can be left, for Stöessel, who even at the war has been represented

knew him in Port Arthur long before war broke out, says that all this is on the surface only. Very likely he has the physical courage which faces death without fear, but he lacks education and the gift of commanding others.

The qualities which he possesses are—insisting on obedience to orders and maintenance of discipline; but no more than this is to be expected from him. Nevertheless it is probable that it is his name which will be connected with the history of the siege, and not that of General Kondratenko, which is the name that should really become famous. Smirnov and Fock are two excellent subordinate leaders, very zealous, very brave, but they do not show that they have sufficient initiative at the moments when it is required. We are all waiting with curiosity and anxiety to see the end of this protracted siege, which has cost us so much blood.

It is quite clear that the garrison will not perish to a man, as they declared would be the case ever since the commencement of the siege.

But what will the generals and admirals do who are inside?

They cannot attempt a desperate sortie, as the opportunity for this has gone by, nor is it

probable that they wish to face the consequences of a general attack, which would result in horrible slaughter.

One of my companions, an officer of the *Asahi*, who watched the taking of 203-Metre Hill from the Japanese camp, told me a couple of nights ago that the Russians fought admirably, also that all the valour of our soldiers and all the skill of our leaders were called into play to overcome their resistance.

A point which undoubtedly contributes very much to the success of the undertaking is the indisputable superiority of our artillery over that of the enemy. While the latter cannot reach our batteries with their shells, ours do tremendous damage to the Russian batteries, and the moral effect produced is far greater and more demoralising than that caused by the projectiles.

Another factor which, since the beginning of winter, has greatly affected the resisting powers of the Russians is that most of the soldiers are without overcoats in this intense cold.

This, combined with the fact that they do not have enough to eat, is sufficient to destroy the energy and dash of the best intentioned. Our

soldiers, on the other hand, have not been without overcoats or complete rations since the beginning of the campaign.

Our military administration has given proofs of admirable organisation, and the Ministers of War and Marine, both present and past, can boast of a foresight seldom surpassed.

The supply of ammunition and food has left nothing to be desired as regards both quantity and punctuality.

It has been said that during the Chinese War there were public officials and contractors who committed absolute iniquities : scandalous defalcations occurred which reflected discredit on the Army. Certainly two Staff officers and three merchants committed suicide without any apparent motive two days after a Commission was opened to inquire into the acts alleged.

However, their punishment proved effective, for this time absolutely no one has failed in the performance of his duty, and all the papers go into ecstasies over the excellence of the auxiliary services. The Marconi wireless-telegraphy apparatus, which was installed on all our ships three months before mobilisation began, has done excellent work.

While I write these lines I can hear the distant sound of guns, which never stops by night or day and keeps the garrison of Port Arthur in a constant state of alarm.

I, who am far from the scene of action, quietly writing in my cabin, well protected from the cold which outside gets more and more intense, cannot help thinking of the anger, the horror which those everlasting gunshots must evoke in the breasts of the besieged.

When all Nature is at rest, when men forget their troubles and sorrows in sleep, and refresh their powers, exhausted during the day; when the darkness and silence of the night seem to establish for a few hours a reign of peace; when all activity has ceased, man, the most intelligent of earthly beings, moved by hatred, an insane, unreasoning passion, rests not, but with ceaseless roar of artillery reminds his fellow creatures that he is burning to accomplish their ruin, and to bring death amongst them. Nor is the grand stillness of the night potent enough to disarm his rage, to quench his destructive passions. Those who have fought, and those who are fighting now—we do not know each other, we do not hate each other.

A STAR-LIT NIGHT AT SEA 219

But the law which governs the human race ordains it, and we must bow to the inevitable.

I see that unconsciously I have embarked in reflections which have nothing to do with a nautical diary.

But the winter nights are very long, and now and again I cannot refrain from remembering that I am a man, first, before being a naval officer, and from thinking as such. These thoughts would certainly not come to me in summer, when one can combat *ennui* by a stroll on deck, while one contemplates that sight which seems ever new and lovely, a star-lit night at sea.

The waves which gently lap the sides of the ship or which strike her with terrible fury, the breeze which blows ever fresh, the scintillations of the stars reflected in the water, clear as a mirror, all these give me a deep and ineffable sensation of pleasure.

But now in mid-winter, shut into a cabin, feeling a shiver at the slightest movement, knowing that outside it is freezing or snowing, that the stars are hidden by a thick fog which not even the moonlight can pierce, and that the breeze which caressed us in summer now cuts like

a knife and penetrates through the best of overcoats to the fur underneath, even one's thoughts feel the depressing influence of the cold.

For cold is the inseparable companion of the death which for months has brooded over Port Arthur, over the camp of our army, over the waters which have engulfed so many bodies since the night of the 9th of February.

Dalny, December 19th.

We have come here to coal, and to-morrow shall return to our look-out post.

I cannot express the delight I feel at the news which I heard here in course of conversation with some of the officers of the Army.

Port Arthur is in its death-throes, but its agony will be much more brief than is generally thought.

While the bombardment from the heavy mortars executes havoc on all the fortifications, the sap-works are proceeding to such an extent that in a few days several forts will be blown up.

Then the lines of defence will have lost much of their efficacy, and the town must surrender or suffer the horrors of an assault without quarter.

In this case all the smaller ships would certainly

take part in the fray, and would land their crews near the forts which defend the harbour.

It would be a magnificent sight, but I do not think we shall have to go to these lengths.

The garrison of Port Arthur is far more numerous than we thought at the beginning of the siege. A Russian officer, taken prisoner during the capture of 203-Metre Hill, who speaks English perfectly, told me that when the siege began at the end of June, there were 47,000 soldiers in Port Arthur. He also thought that it would still take us a long time and cost us much loss of life before the town was taken.

I did not want to make him more unhappy than he was already, by telling him that we knew for certain that ammunition and food were failing, and that lack of these and not of men would compel the Russians to surrender.

He spoke of General Kondratenko, and of his contempt for death, and sang his praises loudly, saying that he was one of the best generals in the Russian Army, and would be a difficult customer for the Japanese to tackle.

When I told him of the general's death he seemed much impressed,

Several hours later I had a talk with some

other prisoners, private soldiers, who said that Russia had put her head into a wasps' nest when she made war with Japan. They think that in the end they will lose not only this campaign but the whole war, and are delighted at it, strange though this may seem, for they say that now they will not have to serve in regions as inhospitable as those in which they have been fighting up till the present. The truth of the matter is that Russia was guilty of an act of madness in compelling us to fight.

In the first place she was not ready to meet our forces, and secondly all her soldiers went unwillingly to a war the object of which they cannot understand.

How can they possibly be victorious when they are without enthusiasm and without adequate preparation?

We, on the contrary, have these advantages, whilst all the Russian prisoners realise that they lack them both.

An officer of the General Staff told me that in a short time there will be a great battle in Manchuria, as the Japanese are determined to inflict a decisive defeat on Kuropatkin's army.

A strange fact is that the Russians, who, ac-

according to the French newspapers and their own, have more men than ourselves in the neighbourhood of Mukden, do not try and make use of this advantage ; for when Port Arthur has surrendered they will have more difficulty in taking the offensive against our army. To conclude, I hope that in a short time there will be great doings.

At Sea, December 20th.

When I came in sight of Port Arthur I heard a furious cannonade going on. So terrible was the noise that I thought our soldiers were delivering the final assault ; but I soon made out that it was only an energetic bombardment, which possibly had no other object than to disguise a partial attack.

It was about nine o'clock in the evening. The darkness was profound, and only now and again, as I looked towards Port Arthur, did I see flames shoot up.

The forts were replying to the fire of our army. Suddenly out of the darkness arose the form of a ship dashing along at full speed, vomiting smoke and flames from her four funnels.

There could be no doubt that she was a Russian vessel, probably one of the destroyers which had

escaped from the bombardment of Nogi's army undamaged.

I tried to cut her off ; but her crew, in blind despair, paid not the slightest attention to my cruiser.

I am sure that had I not changed my course she would have struck me fair and square and we should both have gone to the bottom.

But while I gave orders to let her pass, I got my guns ready for action and began to fire on her.

The first shots cannot have struck her, for she did not reply to them, but soon afterwards she fired her after guns, without ceasing to run on at a speed far greater than mine.

One of her shells fell near our bows. For a long time I continued the fire and pursuit, but my ship was losing ground.

The hostile boat must have been the *Boriastock*, one of the swiftest and most modern destroyers which the Russian fleet possessed, and also heavily armed.

Her guns never stopped answering ours, perhaps because this was to be the last fight in which a ship from the Port Arthur squadron would take part ; or possibly because the destroyer was carrying all the admirals on board.

They were now out of range and could have reached Chefu without molestation, when, doubtless from bravado, they slackened speed, and as I increased mine we were soon within easy range.

She now fired her two stern guns, set off again at full speed, and, turning to starboard, got broad-side on and fired two more rounds.

Observing that she had made a good shot, and that one of her shells had opened a hole near my water-line, close to the engine-room, she got bolder, and for two minutes steamed along parallel to me, firing her starboard guns.

Another shell smashed one of my funnels, yet my fire never touched the cursed boat ; she seemed to be invulnerable. A very good sailor must have been in command, judging by her manœuvring.

My second in command was in as deep despair as myself at not being able to damage the Russian boat. The latter again dashed off at full speed, and was nearly lost to view, when suddenly a torpedo-man and two gunners uttered shouts of joy.

One of our last shots had smashed two of her funnels, and another projectile had made a great hole in the stern.

For a moment she seemed to lose speed ; but in a few minutes she disappeared completely into the darkness. Was she going to Chefu ? Was she going to Kiau-chau ? In any case her crew could consider themselves saved. The officer who commanded the boat must have been delighted with the way they behaved.

If the commanders of the large battleships which are lying at the bottom of the roadstead of Port Arthur had been capable of manœuvring, defending themselves, and attacking as that destroyer has just done, our magnificent squadron would probably have lost some of its fighting units, and many vessels would have had to undergo repairs in the dockyards. The pursuit lasted some minutes ; but realising that it was absolutely impossible for me to keep up with my enemy, I turned round and returned towards Port Arthur. On the way I repaired the damage done by the enemy's fire as best I could, and subsequently gave an account of my fight to the commander of my division.

It hurt me deeply to have to confess that the destroyer had escaped, but in view of her superiority over my ship in point of speed, it was not at all strange.

At Sea, December 21st.

We hear that the destroyer which escaped yesterday, leaving a record of her powers in the hull of my *Katzumo*, was commanded by the former captain of the *Bayan*, now a vice-admiral, having been promoted for the purpose of preventing Prince Uktomski from taking command at the last. Truly Virenius's selection was an admirable one—yesterday's sortie proved it.

What a pity that he was only given command of the squadron when matters were hopeless! When he took command of the battleships there was not a gun, not a case of ammunition on board, and the engines were almost entirely destroyed—so the bluejackets whom we captured on the 14th say.

All the guns have been mounted in the forts so as to contribute to their defence—a lamentable error which cost the Russians dear.

From the first moment of the siege, Alexeieff, Kuropatkin, and Stöessel ought to have realised that the most important thing to be saved was not the stronghold, for this must have succumbed sooner or later, unless it were relieved, but the

squadron : that squadron which, in conjunction with the one from the Baltic Sea, could have inflicted such damage upon us as would almost have amounted to a disaster.

Instead of this the ships have been sacrificed in the defence of the stronghold, the squadron has been destroyed, Port Arthur is on the verge of capitulation, and the command of the sea is lost to Russia without hope of being regained.

At Sea, December 22nd.

An hour ago we weighed and proceeded to Sasebo. Some of the others are going to Nagasaki and Osaka. We are going to clean the bottoms of our vessels and repair the damage done in this long campaign, which, although not very bloody, has never allowed us a moment's rest.

Admiral Togo ought to be well pleased. He has succeeded in destroying a fleet as powerful as his own without losing more than a battleship and a second-class cruiser.

The enemy, on the other hand, have lost seven battleships, two armoured and eight protected cruisers, twenty torpedo-boats, four destroyers, two mine-layers, two gunboats, and a quantity of

less important craft, both mercantile and belonging to the Navy.

Truth to tell, most of the blame for these huge losses lies at the door of these same Russian sailors, who have never tried to fight, but only to preserve their ships from harm.

With what object? No one can conceive, when we look at their disastrous end.

Did we not know that the Russians fight well when the opportunity occurs, it might be thought that it is fear which has inspired such strange behaviour on the part of our adversaries.

Perhaps it is an absolute want of skill, a complete lack of preparation, an inconceivable ignorance of the complicated machinery in their charge, which have lost the command of the sea to the Russians, have permitted us to gain it, and left us force sufficient to maintain it.

How terrible must be the position of the surviving admirals! What bitterness they must feel! I fear that many of the officers will commit suicide when they see that it is impossible to leave Port Arthur except as prisoners.

One of our naval officers, poor Katavara, who fell into the hands of the Russians during the second attempt at closing the harbour, when he

found himself in prison dashed his head against the wall of his cell, and made a great gash in his skull which stretched him senseless.

They took him to hospital, and when he recovered consciousness he absolutely refused to eat. The doctors fed him against his will, but he was anxious for death, and he died.

The attendant relaxed his vigilance for a moment, and Katavara hurled himself headlong from the second floor to the courtyard.

He died because he did not want to survive the shame of having been taken prisoner, in spite of the fact that he had done his duty like a hero.

How I long to hold my dear ones in my arms !
My father awaits me at Sasebo, and I shall be granted leave to go and embrace my mother and brothers. My uncle Kato, who is also going to Sasebo on board the *Iwate*, has already announced my arrival.

How glad my relations will be to see me, and with what pride shall I show them the badges of my new rank !

Sasebo, December 24th.

It is unlikely that we shall have to return to

Port Arthur. Torpedo-boats and destroyers are doing all the blockade duty. A division composed of four large armoured cruisers remains in reserve at the Elliott Islands.

It appears that the Chinamen, who up till now have felt confident that Port Arthur would be relieved, have given up all hopes, and therefore do not try to bring in provisions.

Besides the heavy price at which they could sell their goods, the blockade runners hoped that if the Russians came off victorious their services would be rewarded. Now they see that they have made a mistake, and do not want to risk their lives uselessly.

There is good news of the war. Marshal Oyama will not allow Kuropatkin's army to take one step forward, and he has men enough at his disposal now to compel the latter to retire towards Siberia.

This morning a colonel of the Staff who has just arrived from the line of the Sha-ho had luncheon with me, and told me that as soon as Port Arthur and Mukden have fallen into our hands, the Russians will be compelled to make peace, unless they are possessed of a suicidal mania.

In this city the animation which one sees in the dockyard and all the State offices is extraordinary. Troops keep constantly coming from the interior, perfectly equipped and clothed for the rigorous cold which prevails in central Manchuria.

The civil population seems most contented, and most hopeful now that it sees the war has not stopped commercial transactions, and that all the industries show greater vitality than before the outbreak of hostilities.

Nagasaki, December 28th.

I have come to this place to do some commissions which are connected with the Navy, but which need not be gone into here.

In this town, like every other in Japan, one notices great enthusiasm, and also the confidence which the masses feel that our Army will emerge victorious from the protracted struggle.

Many of the business houses have subscribed largely to the Interior Loans, and this probably not from motives of patriotism, but because they realise that they are investing their money well, and that their expenditure will be reproductive.

A great naval contractor said to me :

“Remember what happened in Prussia and Germany during the Franco-Prussian War. Many timorous patriots said that though Prussia would be victorious in the war she had undertaken, her situation would be very precarious, for the expenditure involved by the war and the efforts she had to make would cripple her for many years to come.

“Those who thought thus were utterly wrong. Prussia developed her industry and commerce in the most wonderful manner, due entirely to the fact of having conquered by her arms a nation which was considered the most powerful in Europe.

“The war indemnity permitted her to offer premiums to shipbuilders, and five years after the victories of Sedan and Paris, Prussia, or Germany, call her what one will, became one of the first commercial nations in the world.

“The English began to fear the articles ‘made in Germany’ which flooded her markets; Russia inaugurated the era of protectionist tariffs, and the whole world was compelled to recognise that the work of Bismarck, Moltke, and Von Roon had produced better results than any one had ever expected.

"The same thing will happen in Japan if our Army conquers the Russians decisively. As Japanese commerce is among the most important in the world, there is no doubt that in the future our rulers will be able to ratify a commercial treaty with China, and obtain most important concessions.

"Many other Asiatic nations which up till now have only been exploited by Europeans, will also be our clients, and then Osaka, Yokomuro, and Yokohama will become ports of the first importance."

I must say I think the worthy merchant spoke to the point, and that the consequences of Japan's victory over Russia will in the future be far greater than the prophets have made out, especially the Russian and French prophets.

When Japan has succeeded in completely taming Russia's pride, all the Asiatic peoples will recognise her supremacy, and the peaceful conquerors who go to China, Indo-china, India, and the Philippines will gain laurels in abundance; in other words, they will do a thriving trade. I do not think that our Government contemplates a Pan-Japaneseism which will make most of Asia ours. I do not think that the Emperor of

Germany, who lays down the law on all subjects without knowing anything really, gets anywhere near the mark when he talks of the "Yellow Peril"; but there is no doubt that our victory will produce good results in the field of commerce as well as in that of politics.

Touching the subject of the Yellow Peril, I must say now, while I have the time, that I have been more than two years in China, that I know the language and customs well, and there is nothing, absolutely nothing, which warrants the supposition that the Chinese will soon follow in the path which the Japanese have trodden, compelled thereto by the rapacity of the Europeans. For the latter tried to do in Japan what they have done in China and all the countries which, because they have not armed themselves in the Western manner nor adopted the uses and customs of Europe and America, appear in European and American eyes to be moribund countries, or rather societies in course of decay, which can only be kept awake under the brutal lash of the white races.

No. China labours under conditions very distinct from those of Japan.

The Chinese utterly abhor the profession of

arms, whilst in our country it has always been the most honourable that a man can adopt.

They are and always have been more civilised than ourselves, and for this reason dislike individualism more.

China will never be a nation of centralisers, but rather a society in which the autonomy of small groups of beings will always be respected, esteemed, and defended with all the energy and tenacity of which the Chinese are capable. This is a doctrine which is beginning to spread amongst all the cultivated races in the world.

A great revolution or an iron rule would be necessary to impose on the Chinese customs diametrically opposed to those which they now possess. Perhaps if the Russian rule in Manchuria had continued for several years, as well as the assaults by the French, Germans, and English on the Chinese coasts, anger might have produced the same effect as foresight, and the Chinese would have armed themselves and inflicted a terrible blow on the European nations, who take that which does not belong to them so freely, and proclaim the superiority of their race over

others of whose good qualities they are completely ignorant.

If the Yellow Peril is to be feared some day, if it materialises and brings harm to the Europeans, I do not think that it will be us Japanese who will provoke it. For it would not profit us in any way. An armed and powerful China is not a neighbour who would suit us. What we desire is to so manage that the Chinese continue as up to the present, peaceful and quiet.

The most we shall do is to try and free them from the aggressions of the Europeans, who, after the lesson we have given Russia, will behave with greater caution and treat the "Yellow Race" as enemies to be reckoned with—the Yellow Race who have made the proudest whites in Europe, the home of the white men, turn their faces to the wall. If China adopts the Occidental civilisation, it will probably not be owing to any encouragement from us, but because the Chinese, made wise by the number of evils they have endured, realise that their integrity will only be respected on the day that they are in a condition to hound those who treat them with insolence from their country.

The reason I have been discussing the Yellow

tion.

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friends have come to c

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known ever since he wa
been through the who
Russians, should have
superiors, and promoted
tion, I think I must
the disaster to the *Petr*
the Russian destroyers,
roth three hundred tin

The papers to-day ha
of the forts of Keikwa
not surprise me.

Once 203-Metre Hill

THE FALL OF PORT ARTHUR 239

And now that these two forts have fallen into our hands, very soon we shall be masters of the situation.

For the very reason that modern forts support each other so effectively, when one falls the rest are in a very critical position.

Anyhow Port Arthur has offered more resistance than I thought possible ; but I think that now it is only a question of days before we hear the news of its surrender.

Sasebo, January 4th, 1905.

The first part of the campaign is finished. Japan's victory is complete—Port Arthur capitulated three days ago. The year is beginning well for our arms.

Stöessel, thirty thousand soldiers, sailors, and officers have surrendered, unwilling to face the horrors of an assault without quarter.

They do not want to follow the example of bygone days, but prefer to follow modern customs !

They are wise in this ; but why say, as Stöessel did, that it would kill him if he had to surrender ?

They say that the Baltic Squadron is approaching. The *Katzumo* is ready to put to sea.



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BEFORE PORT ARTHUR

I have got orders from Admiral Togo, and **sail** with my ship to-night. Whither ? if the **war** continues, and a new campaign takes place in which I do not perish, perhaps some day I **shall** tell the tale.

THE END





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